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"Well, it's disappeared,"  
Mrs. Foster muttered.  
"Explain that, will you?"

# Voice of a dove

Second instalment of our  
new mystery serial

By DOROTHY EDEN

IT is interest in a child, whom she hears cleverly mimicking adults in the next-door garden, that impels SARAH STACEY to apply for the position of governess there.

Sarah had been spending a pleasant holiday with her AUNT FLORENCE. She now finds herself instead in an oddly assorted household.

Eight-year-old JENNIE FOSTER, the child, is withdrawn and difficult, too often talking morbidly of her mother, MARY FOSTER, and baby brother, ROBERT, who both died at the baby's birth.

Her father, ELIOT FOSTER, an unsuccessful composer, is gloomy and nervous. OLIVER FOSTER, Eliot's brother and a rising young playwright, keeps the household on an even keel, but his wife, VENETIA, is a neurotic invalid, and old MRS. FOSTER drags herself with food.

The household is completed by kind, motherly MRS. HOPKINS, the housekeeper, and PETUNIA, the maid. Staying there also at present is TIM ROYLE, Mary's brother, recently returned from an Antarctic expedition. He shows Sarah a dangerous stairway to the cellar, grimly stating that a fall down those stairs caused the death of Mary and her baby. NOW READ ON.

SARAH'S adaptability for sleeping soundly in strange beds deserted her that night. She heard the clock strike one, then two. A little after that she thought she heard the floor creaking above.

Her nervousness made her impatient with herself. This household certainly wasn't an ordinary one, but there was nothing in it about which to get nervous. It was merely the strain of the evening and now the lateness of the hour that made her exaggerate things.

Then the piano above her began to play. So the creaking had been Eliot going up to the attic. She certainly didn't appreciate his tendency to compose music in the middle of the night, but if that was all that was going on upstairs it was nothing to worry about.

All she could think of now was that musicians were awkward and uncomfortable people if inspiration attacked them in the small hours. She would have to get used to this and sleep through it.

But she didn't think she ever would, because she would always think of the faint, un-

relaxed sadness of Eliot's face and wonder if it was that rather than inspiration that drove him to his piano.

Mary must have known about those steps. If she had been living in the house she must have known. If she had just been visiting it would have been different.

She could have tripped and fallen. Tim was simply looking for melodrama. Angry at his sister's death, he wanted someone on whom to pin the blame. But who was the Lexie Adams they had talked about and what had happened to her?

The piano above her was playing a simple melody over and over again. Sarah found herself fitting words to it: You'll never find out, you'll never find out. Resolutely she turned over and willed herself to sleep.

Petunia brought her tea in the morning.

"Mrs. Hopkins says you oughtn't to expect it," she said, "but since I have to bring it up to Mrs. Foster you might as well have a cup. She says to turn it three times and she'll read the leaves for you."

"Thank you, Petunia," Sarah said. "Tell Mrs. Hopkins it's very kind of her."

"Though I wouldn't believe too much what she sees, miss," Petunia said, pushing a straggle of hair under her cap. "It can be downright upsetting. She keeps seeing new men for me, and I've been going steady with Jimmy for six months. What do I want with new men?"

"What, indeed?" Sarah murmured. "What does Jimmy do?" she asked.

"He's a bus conductor. Works awful late sometimes. Picks up queer language, too. Maybe I should look for a new man like Mrs. Hopkins says. It might teach him a lesson. I hope she sees a good-looking one in your cup, miss."

"I hope nothing of the kind," said Sarah. "I have a job."

When Petunia had gone she got up, bathed and dressed, then went into Jennie's room. Jennie was not there but in the schoolroom, sitting on the floor with two of the dolls.

The dolls were a man and a woman. The woman had a piece of crumpled blue satin draped round her shoulders, and Jennie was saying in her precociously clever imitation of Oliver's jolly voice, "You see how much I love you, my darling."

Then, in Venetia's nervous, excitable voice, she said, "Oh, I do, Oliver. It's so sweet of you. You know how I love beautiful things."

"Good morning, Jennie," said Sarah calmly.

The child started sharply, showing how absorbed she had been in her play-acting. She looked up at Sarah and her face was a little exasperatingly unreadable mask.

"Good morning, Miss Stacey." She picked up the dolls possessively.

Sarah wanted to ask her if she deliberately eavesdropped because of the way she seemed to know all that went on in the house. But she was too afraid of antagonising the child

completely. Even now it was going to be hard enough to gain her confidence.

"You're very clever at mimicking, Jennie," she said. "Where did you learn it?"

"Nowhere. I just do it."

"Well, it's quite a talent, but you want to be careful how you use it."

"I don't make things up," Jennie said in her shutting-out adult voice. "I just do things that have happened."

"Such as what?" Sarah prompted.

"Uncle Oliver gave Aunt Venetia a new robe to celebrate the three-hundredth performance of his play. I was just doing that."

"Well, put the dolls away now."

Jennie obediently packed them into the cupboard. Then she turned her stolid face. "Are you going to forbid me playing with them?"

"No, of course not, Jennie."

"Father said you would. Aunt Venetia said so, too."

Sarah wondered involuntarily how long it would be before Jennie trusted her. Unless she went very carefully now it would be never. Jennie's dislikes would last a long time. It seemed very important, more important than anything else, to gain her confidence and love.

"I don't mind you playing with the dolls," she said carefully, "and mimicking people, too, so long as you're not cruel. Remember never to be cruel."

Jennie closed the cupboard door and stood up. It seemed to Sarah that her face was a little less guarded. She said primly, "Breakfast is at half-past eight, and Uncle Oliver doesn't like anyone to be late because he goes into his study to work at nine o'clock."

"Very well, then, let's go down," Sarah said briskly, "because our work begins at nine, too."

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Page 3



**O**LIVER was the only one in the dining-room when Sarah and Jennie went in. "Ah, good morning," he said. "Come and sit down. We never wait breakfast for anyone. Eliot frequently doesn't have it, and Tim's as lazy as they're made. How ever he organised an expedition is beyond me. But there you are. Most people are surprised to hear I work hard, too."

"How is Venetia this morning?" Sarah asked.

"Oh, much better. She'll be up later. She's all right, you know. She just has a slight chest condition we have to watch."

Petunia came in with the coffee, and milk for Jennie, and they all sat down.

"I start work at nine sharp," Oliver said. "I shut myself up for four hours. I've had to make rigid rules about it."

He spoke with simple pride in his achievement and gave his friendly smile. "And what about you two? Have you planned a time-table?"

"I'm drawing one up this morning," Sarah answered.

"Good. Get some outdoor stuff into it, too. There's a cafe in the gardens where they make little cakes with currants and bits of ginger. Jennie likes them. Don't you, kitten?"

Jennie answered, "Yes, Uncle Oliver," in her prim voice.

Sarah had the impression that Oliver liked them, too, that he often went there and would appreciate her company. But that, surely, was wishful thinking on her part.

She looked up and caught Oliver's eyes, blue and twinkling, began to blush, then was saved from embarrassment by Tim's sudden appearance at the door and his laconic voice saying, "Good morning. Am I late?"

He looked from Sarah to Oliver, his eyes deliberately innocent. "Have I interrupted something?"

Sarah felt the color in her cheeks again, this time from anger. She wanted to tell this impertinent young man just

## Voice of a Dove Continued from page 3

what she thought of him. Before very long she would.

"Jennie's curriculum," Oliver answered. "Isn't that a grand, solemn word. What do you think of it, Jennie?"

"I think time-table would be easier," Jennie answered.

Tim put his hand on her head and ruffled her smooth hair.

"Out of the mouths of babes," he said, but to Sarah's astonishment she saw a dawning smile on Jennie's face, and a glimmer of softness in her eyes.

Curiously, she had a feeling of anger and jealousy that Tim should have found the way behind Jennie's mask so soon.

After that, breakfast was quite uneventful. Oliver ate rapidly, looked at his watch, and seeing that it was ten minutes to nine, excused himself. Sarah heard him run up the stairs two at a time to Venetia's room.

"The devoted husband," Tim observed behind the morning paper.

Without reason his mild, impersonal voice irritated Sarah. "And why not?" she asked coldly.

"Darling, I must now toil for four long, weary hours so that I can buy you more beautiful clothes!" Tim's left eye appeared round the paper.

"You're perfectly right to look heated, my dear," he went on in his normal voice. "Oliver's a nice fellow, and it's quite time I relearn my manners. One loses them down south. Only penguins to talk to."

He added with a smile, "You should hear the language I've learnt from them. Petunia's Jimmy has nothing on me."

Jennie giggled and instantly smothered the small, surprising sound. Was it possible she could be a normal child after all?

"Finish your milk, Jennie," Sarah said.

Jennie drank obediently, her eyes over the edge of the glass on Tim all the time.

"I," said Tim behind his paper, "have a busy day ahead of me. The morning with my

tailor, then lunch in Soho. Do you enjoy finding new restaurants, Sarah?"

"It hasn't been one of my hobbies."

"Lack of opportunity, probably. It's quite fascinating. I vary my nationalities as much as possible."

Sarah, supervising the finish of Jennie's breakfast, made no answer.

The whole of Tim's face appeared round the paper. "You don't like me much, do you, Sarah?"

Before she could reply, if she could have thought of a suitable reply, he went on, "Don't let it worry you. I usually have that effect on people at first. But I grow on them. Maybe I'll grow on you. Stranger things happen. One day we might even be making violent love in The Highlander. Speculation's fascinating, isn't it?"

"I could think of a better word," said Sarah. "Come along, Jennie. We've got work to do."

Jennie proved to be a co-operative but uninspiring pupil. Sarah, fumbling her way through unfamiliar and almost forgotten reading, history, and geography books, had one eye automatically on the door. She fully expected a visitor. Old Mrs. Foster, at least, would not be able to resist finding out what was going on.

Probably Eliot would be interested to see the steps being taken in his daughter's education. It was too much to expect that Oliver would make an exception and break off his work to come up. But someone would surely look in to see Jennie sitting primly at her small table, her head bent over her exercise book.

At eleven o'clock, sure enough, there was a tap at the door, but when Sarah called, "Come in," the only person to appear was Petunia carrying a tray.

"Your elevenses, miss," she said. "Mrs. Hopkins said as how you'd probably enjoy them,

and Jennie always has her milk now. Oh, and Mrs. Hopkins said to tell you as how she saw a real lovely man in your cup. Very close, too, if he ain't here already. You should be hearing from him any day. Ain't it exciting?"

"I think Mrs. Hopkins has quite an imagination," Sarah said.

"Oh, it's all true, miss. She saw my Jimmy two days before I met him, and that was the day he overcharged me. We was both so mad we was going to call the police when suddenly it happened."

"What happened?"

"Why, we discovered we were soul mates. Or as near as makes no matter."

Puzzled as to how a wrong bus ticket could cause Petunia to arrive at so dramatic a conclusion, Sarah waited for her to go on, which she obligingly did.

"It was the look in his eye," she said dreamily. "We've been going steady ever since. Mrs. Hopkins' teacups comes true. You wait and see."

**L**UNCH, too, was a disappointing meal. Eliot was there, but he was quite uncommunicative beyond explaining that Oliver had gone into town to lunch. There was no sign of Venetia, and old Mrs. Foster was engrossed in her food.

Sarah decided to take Jennie on a nature study walk through Kensington Gardens in the afternoon, and perhaps have tea at the place Oliver had mentioned.

Before going she took the ribbons out of Jennie's hair and unplaited it.

"Wait till I get a brush," she said.

When she had brushed the long, straight, silky locks until they gleamed and tied a ribbon with a frivolous bow on top of Jennie's head, there was color in Jennie's cheeks and her eyes were very large.

"Look at yourself in the mirror," Sarah said.

Jennie did so, staring at herself as if she saw a stranger.

"I look sissy," she muttered. "You look pretty," Sarah insisted. "Jennie, how would you like to have a party?"

"A party! I wouldn't know how to be at a party."

"Indeed you would. When all the other children came."

"What children?" Jennie asked flatly, and Sarah realised that she had no contact at all with other children.

"Oh, the ones Aunt Florence and I know. We know lots who'd love to come."

"Do you?" Jennie looked at her guardedly. It was impossible to tell whether she was pleased or not, but at least she wasn't hostile. "What would I wear?"

"A party dress, of course. I'll speak to your father myself."

Jennie gave her a long, reflective look. She still didn't show any eagerness. Obviously she was weighing up the advantages of a party as against retaining her lonely state.

Then she said primly, "It would have to be Uncle Oliver you asked."

Sarah decided to call in on Aunt Florence on the way. Aunt Florence obviously had been expecting it, for she showed no surprise. She looked hard at Jennie, said, "So this is the child," then patted her on the shoulder.

"Run along to the kitchen," she said. "It's the second door on the right. Ask Bertha for a piece of cake."

Jennie looked at her unmovingly. "We're going to the cafe for tea, thank you."

"Then go and play with Hamlet. But don't rub his fur the wrong way."

"Who's Hamlet?" Jennie asked.

"He's a large, elderly, rather bad-tempered cat. He'll most likely hate you on sight. On the other hand, I think the two of you might have something in common. Go and see."

**L**OOKING more human in her bewilderment, Jennie went. Aunt Florence took Sarah into the drawing-room.

"What a little gargoyle," she said. "Looks right into you."

"I know," said Sarah fully. "I haven't any screen from her. I don't think anyone has in that house."

"But they must have, my dear. A child can't know every thing." She sat down and folded her hands in her lap. "Tell me all," she said eagerly.

It was a relief to talk, but only because Aunt Florence was an interested and intelligent listener, but because talking seemed to arrange the household next door in better perspective.

"So Mary had an accident," Aunt Florence said. "Poor girl. Anything else?"

Sarah remembered about the actress, Lexie Adams, but what had happened to her or what she had to do with the Foster household she didn't know.

"I don't think there's anything wrong," she said. "They're just rather unusual people. Eliot is brooding on his wife's death, and he's not had any success so far with his music. Venetia isn't strong, and I would think likes pampering. Jennie should be a natural child when she's had some normal life."

She added: "Oliver's the one who keeps things on an even keel. Oh, and there's Mrs. Hopkins. She reads teacups. She's already seen the man in my life, Petunia and I think it's a joke."

"It's not a joke," came Jennie's voice suddenly and startlingly behind her. "Mrs. Hopkins sees real things. She saw there's death in the house. And she doesn't mean my mother and Baby Robert. She means someone else. You wait and see."

The child's large eyes, completely lacking in warmth, her sombre face and the conviction in her voice were unreasonably disturbing.

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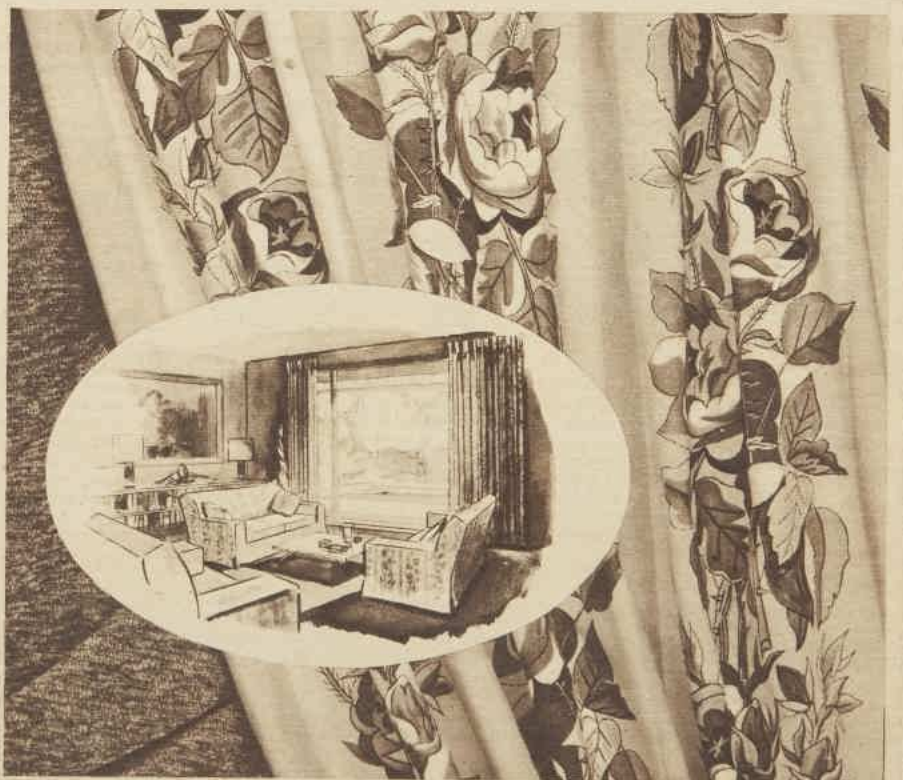
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# A matter of PSYCHOLOGY

A short story by JOHN STUART MILNE

DEREK GALLWAY sounded confident. "It's all a matter of psychology," he said. "When you know women as well as I do you get to know the formula."

Bruce Maxwell eyed him doubtfully.

"First I ever heard that women worked to a formula," he murmured.

"You bachelors wouldn't know," Derek said. "Take it from me, women aren't as mysterious as you might imagine. But it takes you twelve years of marriage to find it out." He smiled. It always gave him a feeling of pleasure to think about how well he and Deborah knew each other.

But, even so, he couldn't ask her straight out if she would mind him having his annual vacation away from her. She wouldn't like that, no matter how innocent it might be. And there couldn't be anything more innocent than a fishing holiday with two male friends.

It was tempting, of course, to fancy that there could be pretty girls holidaying at Blue Lake. And no broadminded person could object to mild flirting.

"Leave it to me, Bruce," he said. "Make it definite; you can go ahead and make the bookings."

He and Deborah hadn't spoken yet about these holidays. They never did until a few weeks before. But that night he brought the subject up.

"Deb," he said tentatively. "Have you noticed lately that I've been irritable—hard to live with almost?"

Deborah looked up from her book, startled. "Well, as a matter of fact I have noticed," she said. "But I haven't complained, have I?"

"Well, no, but you seldom do. It's on my conscience, darling. The truth is, you see too much of me, and I'm thinking of doing something about it."

Deborah put down her book, looking at her husband carefully. "When I begin to think I'm seeing too much of you I'll let you know," she said.

Derek put his hand out and grasped hers. "You always were self-sacrificing," he said. "But a man reaches the stage when he has to do something about it, if he really loves his wife and wants to keep her happy."

"I see," Deborah said. "Derek, darling, you do keep me happy. Honestly. There's nothing to worry about."

"I've made up my mind," he said. "I'm not altogether happy about it, but I'm going on a holiday alone—or rather with Bruce Maxwell and Johnny Hibbs. Up to Blue Lake. No distractions, nothing except sun and fish. And I'm going to get this crankiness out of my system."

Deborah was silent. Derek peered at her anxiously and tried to hide it. "It's for both our sakes, sweetheart," he said quietly. "I know I'm being pretty rotten to you lately, but when I come back I'll be a new man."

Deborah was thinking. Derek sighed heavily to denote resignation. He mustn't overdo it, lay it on too thickly. That was the secret of it. Women weren't difficult if a man used his head. In any case, the break apart really would do them both good. Any marriage needed it; the partnership would get a new gloss, a fresh attraction.

"Well," Deborah said slowly. "You can't expect me to be thrilled about it. But I suppose you're right. Yes, I know you're right."

"I owe it to you," Derek said simply.

She smiled at him affectionately. "I'm afraid I never knew you were so understanding, darling. I'll be able to fall in love with you all over again when you come back. And Johnny and Bruce are the best companions you could have."

Derek wasn't so sure about Johnny Hibbs, but nodded agreeably.

"You'll have the house nice and quiet to yourself," he said. "You need a rest."

"I'm not sure that I'll stay here," Deborah said. "But you'll want to tell the boys it's definite, won't you? Better ring them."

Derek was about to say it was already definite, but said hastily. "Yes, I'd better ring them." He looked back, laughing over-heartily. "One thing about it, darling. You don't have to worry about other women getting their claws into us. No women at Blue Lake."

"I'm not worried about that, dear," Deborah said. "I trust you. But if you should meet some nice girls there's no reason to be unfriendly just because you're married."

Derek stared at her, mouth open. "After all," Deborah said, "don't let's be old-fashioned!"

Derek had to keep his voice low on the phone, but that didn't disguise his confident enthusiasm. "I told you I could do it," he said. "Just psychology."

Nobody said anything about holidays for a few days, until Derek brought home some new fishing gear. He took it into the bedroom to lay it out on the bed, as usual, but there was no room; Deborah had some new frocks and accessories laid out on the bed there.

"Like them?" she said. "Holiday frocks."

He frowned. "Holiday frocks?"

"And some shoes," she said. "And a new suitcase and a few other things. But I was as economical as possible. I left them out to show Sue Harvey."

Derek was fluttering his fingers, trying to get a word in. "Sue? Is she coming tonight?"

"Should be here now; I invited her to talk over our ideas." The bell rang and she ran out. Derek stared after her, then at the frocks.

Sue was the vivacious type, with a liking for words and plenty of them to use.

"It's a marvellous idea, Derek!" she said excitedly as they sat down to dinner. "What a pity more married couples don't have holidays apart! Common sense really."

Derek coughed. "It's really me having the holiday," he said. "Such as it is; more a sort of convalescence."

"That's what I mean," Sue said. "You're worn out and tired from business. You'd be quite out of place holidaying at Strathavon."

Derek had been to Strathavon—bright lights, dances, people, plenty to do. He laughed. "Oh, yes! Not for me, thanks!"

"But just right for Deb," Sue prattled. "I do think it's refreshing to know a man who isn't a slave to convention. Really, I do. Deb and I will have a marvellous time!"

Derek said carefully: "Deb and you will have a marvellous time? You're coming to stay with her? That's a good—"

"I simply haven't had a chance to tell you," Deb said. "We only decided to-day about Strathavon and I rushed out and bought some clothes."

"One of those dresses," Derek said, "wasn't decent."

"Oh, for Pete's sake!" Sue cried. "You wouldn't want her going to Strathavon looking plain and unattractive. There'll be a lot of men and—"

She broke off and coughed embarrassedly while she made noises of confusion and contrition.

Deborah said quickly: "Strathavon's on the way to Blue Lake; we'll all go up on the same train."

Derek laughed unpleasantly. "This is a darn silly sort of joke!" he said.

The girls stared at each other, surprised. "Joke?" Deborah said. "Darling, I'm serious. I think your idea is wonderful; we both need different sorts of holidays. You need rest, I need gaiety."

"You're a dope, Deb," Sue said. "He means he

thinks Strathavon's not the place for us. Too many men. But don't forget I'm not married, Derek."

"That is not what I mean!" Derek was breathing hard. "Look, Deborah, I didn't know anything about this and—"

"I'm telling you now," his wife said. Then she started. "You're not objecting to my having a holiday!"

"Not after she's been decent enough to let you go on your own?" Sue said spiritedly.

"You shut up!" Derek snarled. "Blast it, Deborah! A woman can't go off like a man! What on earth—"

Deborah bit her lip, but her eyes watered. "I thought it was understood. I didn't think you'd want me to stay at home all alone."

"No need to be alone," Sue said. "I'll move in and we'll have a few parties."

Derek was quivering. He shook his fist under Sue's nose. "Keep quiet!" he said tensely.

"Don't be stupid!" Deborah said. "You're just plain narrow-minded! We'll stick to Strathavon, Sue."

Derek stood up quickly. "Deb," he said slowly, "suppose I wipe my holiday and we go away together after all. I mean, if you'd rather have it that way... Well, for your sake I'd—"

"It would be much nicer," Deborah said in a small voice.

"Then I'll do it!" Derek said. "I'll ring Bruce right now."

He nearly added: "Before I lose my nerve."

When the door closed behind him, Sue whispered: "Boy, we really got under his skin, didn't we?"

Deborah said: "It's all a matter of psychology." And she smiled confidently.

(Copyright)

"How do you like my new holiday clothes?" Deborah gaily asked Derek.



Illustrated by Boothroyd



# New! Angel Face by Pond's

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# IT HAPPENED BETWEEN FLOORS

By MERVYN ANDREWS

ILLUSTRATED BY HEDSTROM



*"I'll risk using the stop button, if you like," he said with a smile. "But it's a bit temperamental."*

HE met him in an elevator that was a drive-yourself, press-and-hope contraption. She liked the way his skin puckered around his eyes when his smile asked her for her floor.

She said, "Third."  
"Mine's second." He found a button and pressed. The elevator lifted as reluctantly as she had risen from her warm bed that morning. "You're new?"

"Cormack's," she said, thinking that that would explain her to him, Cormack's having just moved into the building.

"I'm Evenflo Constructions," he told her.

The elevator whined past second and groaned past third. Perhaps he did not notice, or maybe he was just on the make. Either way she should have resented it at five minutes past nine in the morning, but she had a weakness for crisp brown hair, soft grey eyes, and a square, rugged face that a wide mouth made good-humored.

But he had noticed. "Someone up top must have beaten me to the punch," he said.

"Isn't there a stop button?" she asked. "Or don't you know how?"

"We'll risk it, if you like, but she's a temperamental old lady. I'll just press and hope."

He pressed "Stop," and the elevator shuddered to a resentful halt between fourth and fifth. He tried third, second, first, ground, and then fourth and fifth in succession, but the old lady continued to be as temperamental as a stubborn mule with an overload.

"We'll have to wait till someone down below wants a ride up," he said.

He grinned at her, looking pleased with himself, as she was, but she thought that a mild protest was called for.

"I'll be late for work," she said.

"So will I, but I have had reasons that didn't look so good to me."

She gave him a sidelong glance, then stared at a pill advertisement, but it failed to hold her interest. She discovered that his name was Bill, and he learned that hers was Noreen. They fixed an appointment for lunch while someone down below rattled and banged on the elevator gate. His watch said nine-fifteen.

"Why don't they press the button?" she asked.

"Perhaps they have," he sighed. "We'd better let them ride, I suppose."

Bill pressed sixth, and the elevator whined reluctantly to the top floor. He opened the gate, then he closed it again, keeping a finger on third. Noreen looked at him suspiciously, but he grinned without trace of repentance or apology.

"All right, I knew," he admitted. "If you don't hit 'Stop' dead level with a floor she won't budge till you press sixth. That lunch appointment still good?"

Her smile said it was, and it was. With a show on Tuesday night to

confirm it, lunch was becoming a habit by Wednesday, but on Thursday morning he had a long face.

"I eat in the office to-day," he told her. "Pay day."

That did not seem a very satisfactory reason, so he took advantage of the elevator's temperament to explain it more fully between third and fourth. Evenflo Constructions had a big payroll, gangs being spread throughout the city. He drew the money from the bank in the morning, and job managers called for it at the office, starting about half-past one.

"Someone's got to sit on the cash when the staff goes for lunch," he concluded. "I'm it."

"Aren't you frightened, alone with all that money?"

His eyes narrowed, and she saw them hard for the first time. He stabbed the button for sixth, and the elevator whined upwards.

"I didn't say I was alone," he said rightly. "I've got company; it fires six shots."

"Oooh!" she said, eyes wide, as the elevator jerked to a stop. The gate opened, clicked shut, and then they started down. "I think I'll get something from the sandwich shop, too."

Bill felt sheepish over his momentary suspicion. "If you brought it down, we could eat together as usual," he suggested.

Noreen looked doubtful. She wanted to do just that, but there were reasons why she should not; the appraising look and the temporary edge to his voice were two of them.

"That would be nice," she said; in just the right tone of regret, "but I just remembered that I promised to see a girl friend at lunch time."

The elevator stopped at third. The latch clicked, but he did not swing the gate open. His grey eyes showed concern, and she could see he had doubts about the girl friend; she thought it best to let him keep on doubting.

"Give her a miss, and make it for lunch down with me, Noreen," he urged, and there was a plea in his grey eyes that she found it hard to resist.

"Well, I don't know that I should." She hesitated, looking at him squarely. "With all that money there, you shouldn't let just anyone in, should you, Bill?"

"I don't," he assured her, then he pressed on the weakening he saw in her. "I don't open up unless they give the right knock. Like this."

With his fingertips, Bill drummed a short tattoo on the gate. She tried it herself, nodding in satisfaction at her imitation. She looked up at him, her eyes sparkling.

"I'll try to make it," she told him.

Bill liked the soft smile that parted her lips as she stepped through when he drew back the gate. He watched until she had tripped along the passage to the door of Cormack's, and to him, the whine of the elevator as it dropped to second seemed sweet music.

From ten past one Bill began glancing at his wrist-watch frequently. He fell to speculating on the contents of the lunch packet that the office-boy had brought him, hoping that time might pass more quickly, but it did no good; unpalatable sandwiches could not oust Noreen from his mind.

At a quarter past one he was anxious and becoming convinced that she would not come. He had not swallowed the line about the girl friend, so she should have arrived, if she were coming. But it might be a boy friend! He pulled a long face, knowing that that might well be with an attractive girl like Noreen.

WHEN his watch showed twenty past one, Bill abandoned hope. He reached dejectedly for the sandwiches, but before he opened the package, a rat-tat sounded on the door. Bill jumped to open it.

"Back up, and don't try anything!"

The voice was brittle and meant what it said. The eyes glittering through the slits in the mask were menacing. Bill did not hesitate with his hands; he shot them up quickly, but he lingered over stepping back on the long chance that there might be someone in the passage.

It was empty, and the elevator stood at second with the gate open, ready for a getaway. Bill found himself praying that Noreen would not walk into anything, when the gun prodded him in the stomach. He had a silencer on, but it would hurt if it talked. Bill stepped back, and the gunman followed through.

There was no room for argument inside the office. Bill could have tried something silly, but the man with the gun meant business; and he was business-like. He had Bill sit on a chair with his hands behind his back. Bill felt handcuffs snap

on his wrists, and he knew that his arms were linked around the leg of a very heavy desk. The gunman strapped his mouth with adhesive tape.

"It was as easy as that," Bill told himself bitterly. It was a sweet line Noreen had fed him, and he had taken it with mouth wide open. He had even given her the door-knock to make it easy. He scowled as the gunman stuffed wads of notes into a briefcase, but the scowl was more at himself than at the other. The gunman walked to the door and listened intently for a moment. With his back to Bill, he slipped the mask from his face, then he opened the door part way and stepped into the gap.

"See you next pay day, Bill," he called back, and the door closed behind him.

Bill heaved at the desk, but it was a long, heavy one with big, plain cupboards along the back of it. He knew that it would take three men to shift it as it was, so, when he heard the elevator whine, he gave over trying any more.

The gunman muttered a curse as the elevator gate started to roll shut; it should not have done that, for he had hooked it back. He hesitated, then turned towards the stairs, but the gate clattered open again, and Noreen's small, oval face peered out at him.

"Going down?" she asked expectantly.

She had seen him, so there was no point in attracting more attention to himself by refusing the ride. He stepped in, and her fingers fumbled over the buttons as the gate clanged shut. She pressed, and the elevator started upwards.

"Bother!" she exclaimed in annoyance. "Someone up top beat me to the button."

With a pout of resignation, she

stepped back from the button board, but he leaned forward, and his finger slammed on the stop sign. The lift jarr'd to a halt midway between floors. He jabbed at the ground button, but the cage hung steady. She heard him swearing under his breath, and she watched with interest as the beads of sweat sparkled on his face.

Second, third, and fourth buttons found the elevator still temperamental, and she whispered a sigh that he did not hear when someone rattled the gate down below and the thumping of heavy-footed men sounded on the stairs.

"Press and hope, that's all you can do with this cage," she said sweetly. "Sometimes it works on sixth."

She was glad she told him, for he was getting a wild look in his eye. Perhaps he was thinking that the men coming up the stairs might be police. She hoped that they were, for she had telephoned them after, coming down the stairs with her lunch, she had seen what was happening in Evenflo's office through the fanlight over the door.

He stabbed at sixth, and the elevator whined upwards. At the top level he slammed the gate open and dived for the stairs. She slammed the gate shut and started the cage down again, but she hit the stop sign between floors. The stairs were his only way out of the building now; she hoped he would meet the police.

Later—hours later, it seemed to Noreen—she was in the elevator with Bill. It stopped between floors.

"Press and hope," she told him.

Bill did, but not with his finger on the button. It was his arms he pressed with, and she liked the feel of them around her. She looked up hopefully for his lips. She liked them, too.

(Copyright)



# The Faded Blue

By Newlin  
B. Wildes

I SAW that the Hunter Stake was the last class and thought to myself that there was as much sense in running it off as there was in holding an election in a dictatorship. But I sent the ten horses around the outside course, brought them into the ring, and then went over each one in detail.

I gave them the whole act—hands down their legs, a look in their mouths. I even got up and rode two of them. I tipped my hat and was very polite to the two lady riders, and asked the right questions. When I got to

Mickey Tor and the grey horse, Mickey winked at me.

The ringmaster was right at my shoulder and I didn't know whether he saw the wink or not—or if he was smart enough to know what it meant. But I could have killed the Mick. I'd fix him later. Then I made a lot of marks on my score card, turned it in, and the ringmaster brought out the ribbons.

He gave the blue ribbon, the first prize, and the purse to Mickey Tor's grey. Some of the crowd didn't like the decision and showed their disapproval by a cold silence. I started out of the ring. My car was parked at the ringside, and Helen was there, but I didn't go there first.

I went up to the committee booth to collect my pay. It's a good idea to get your money while they have it. Later they might find that the show has flopped financially and your money with it.

I counted the money and started for my car. A small man in tweeds touched my arm. He was quality.

"Mr. Carey," he said, "may I ask you a question?"

"Certainly," I said, very short. You have to start out short and abrupt with these fellows. Set them back. "What is it?"

"I—er," he said, "would you mind telling me what was wrong with my horse in the Hunter Stake?"

"What was your horse's number?" I said. "They're just numbers to me." I knew which his horse was, all right.

"Twenty-six," he said, "the chestnut. I thought he—"

"I'd have to look at my card," I said. I could feel Helen watching me from the car.

"Would you mind?" the slight man persisted.

"Not at all," I said sourly.

We went over to the announcer's booth and found the score card. I examined it. It had more marks on it than a bachelor's shirt. They didn't mean much.

"Your horse," I said carefully, "your horse made a fine round. He's a top horse. But he wavered at the fourth jump, the in-an-out. He didn't quite come at it true and eagerly—not with hunting courage. I'm sorry," I said. I didn't know whether he would take it or not. He might have been at the fourth jump. He took it.

"Oh," he said. "Oh, I see." I snapped the card back.

"Keep on working him," I said. "He'll win for you." I left him and went over to my car. Helen was sitting in the front seat.

"Hi," I said. Helen moved over. She smiled at me, but the smile had something in it that I didn't like. Or didn't have something that I wanted.

She's a small girl, Helen Marlow, very blond and with a skin that's always just brushed lightly with tan—just honey-perfect. She doesn't say a great deal, and when she does it counts. You can tell that by her eyes. They're blue and level; they don't miss things. Sometimes I wish they did. Like to-day.

"Let's get out of here," I said. I was throwing my hat in the back seat when Helen said, "Nick," very quietly. But urgently. I looked around.

He was a big, beefy fellow, with no coat and no tie and his sleeves rolled up. He was standing about thirty feet away, and the two men with him were half holding him back and all glowering at me. I walked over to him slowly, sizing him up. By the time I got there I knew.

He was a professional, but he didn't belong to the inner group. He'd have a horse or two, and he'd train them with a whip, and then he'd shoot them into shows and hope for a break. I knew the kind.

"Did you want to see me?" I said. He outweighed me by a couple of stone, and he was really mad. Well, we'd see.

"You're a cheap crook," he said. "You pin up those horses by their owners' names. You don't need a score card—you just need a list. You—"

I recognised him now. I'd seen him walking his horse. You notice things from the ring. You notice things all over the grounds. It's a good idea.

"Okay," I said, "now I'll tell you something. And you listen—before you get in trouble."

I stood just close enough to him and watched his eyes. If he was going to hit me it would show there first, and I wouldn't wait. I'd get the first one in, and it would be in his middle.

"You bought that horse of yours," I said, "a month ago. He never hunted. You put him in a chute, and chase him up and down over jumps for a few days, and then you bring him out here and put him up against real hunters—really top stuff—and you have the nerve to expect him to win. Isn't that right?"

I kept it on him. For a second I didn't know. Then his eyes dropped just a shade.

*Mickey Tor was still on the filly, trying not to look angry, while nearby the youngster and her father waited for me to say something.*





# He was a good judge of horses—women too—until one challenged his whole way of life

"My horse deserved to be two or three," he said. "He went clean. He—"

"He didn't deserve a thing," I said. And I was right. "But I'm going to give you a break. I'm not going to turn your name in to the association. I'm not going to bar you." That was just a bluff. "Take your horse home and school him with some brains and maybe you'll have something. And don't go around yelling at judges. It doesn't pay."

I turned and went back to my car. That one was easy. The first one had been tough. I felt almost righteous. I expected Helen to say something. She didn't. She just sat there beside me and we drove off for a meal.

We had two drinks and I felt better. I leaned back. I grinned at Helen. "That sun was wicked out there to-day," I said.

"It must have been," she said. "It certainly faded that last blue ribbon."

I looked at her.

"What do you mean?" I said.

"Don't play dumb, Nick," she snapped at me. "Don't you think I know what's going on—even without seeing Mickey Tor wink at you? Do you think I've been going around to these horse shows with you for two years, watching everything, hearing things, and still not know the score? Stop it, Nick."

We looked at each other hard and straight for seconds, and I loved her more then than I ever had in those two years — which was a lot.

"Okay," I said, "let's get it straight. Let's get it on the line. I judge horse shows. Once I used to ride them—the hunters and the jumpers. Now I judge them. I do it to make money, so that you and I can eat in spots like this and I can have the car and decent clothes—stuff that my pay in the office won't allow."

She started to break in there, but I wouldn't let her.

"Let's be grown-up about this thing," I said. "There are two kinds of people who make horse shows—who show horses. First, there are the rich ones, the ones with money. Most of them hire some professional to ride, to do the work, and they sit on the side-lines and come out only to collect the ribbons. When they win they get their pictures in the paper, and a write-up as sportsmen, and they feel good."

"Once in a while they have a bad nightmare when they dream that they're riding a horse over jumps themselves. That passes. To them a blue ribbon is just a swelled chest and cancelled cheques. Then there's the other bunch—the pros."

I stopped for a second and Helen was watching me very closely. She wasn't disagreeing with me—not yet. And I couldn't help but think how lovely she'd be to have around, whether the going was rugged or easy. Particularly when it was rugged. Then I went on.

"The pros," I said, "are in this thing to make a living. For themselves and for their families. Maybe they're crazy to be in the business, but it's got them. Go out some morning—you've done it—and watch them doing the real work, the dirty work."

"Watch them take the green ones, the rank green horses, and work with them, hour after hour, day after day. Watch them take the falls and the risks, weep with them when a good prospect goes sour or lame, and you write it off and start again. You start again and keep going and then, one day, if you're lucky, you've got a horse that's really up there—that's ready—that can perform."

ILLUSTRATED  
BY LASKIE

"It isn't often the best horse in the circuit," I went on; I was really going now. "It isn't perfect. Few of them are. But—it's good. You've got a chance—a chance to make some money that you need. So what happens?" I took a drink of water.

"What happens," I said, "is that you get in touch with some owner and you say, 'Mr. So-and-So, I've got a made hunter down at my place that would be just right for you.' You ask him to come down and have a look. You try to find out what time he's coming if you can, and, if he's dumb, he'll set a time. If he's smart he'll just arrive unannounced."

"And you hope and pray that on this day your horse won't refuse a fence, as they all will some days, and you put the horse around and he happens to do good. And your prospect says, 'Hm. What do you want for him?' You tell him the starting price. He says it's ridiculous. He goes away. But you can tell if he's on the hook or not. You know."

I ate three shrimps and they might have been baked potatoes. I was that warmed up.

"So," I said, "so you smooth your horse up some more, and then you put him in a couple of gymkhanas—little shows off in the country where no one will see you, you hope. And then you enter him in a good show in your prospect's neighborhood. But first you find who the judge is going to be. And, if you fit and he fits, you have a talk with him."

"The way Mickey Tor did with you, before to-day," Helen said very quietly.

"Okay," I said, "the way Mickey Tor did with me." I was suddenly on the defensive. I didn't like it. "But get this straight," I said, "Mickey's horse has to be good. He can't make any real mistakes. He—"

"Mickey's horse wasn't the best one out there to-day," Helen told me. "The chestnut that belonged to the little man in tweeds—that was the best horse. Wasn't it?"

I could feel my face getting red. "Mickey's is a good horse," I insisted. "It—"

"Would you pick it for yourself over the other one?" Helen kept on.

I sat back. I frowned. "All right," I said. "I wouldn't. You know that. But to Mickey it meant a sale, money, his livelihood. To the other man—just a ribbon."

"How much is Mickey paying you for that blue?" Helen said. She had never gone that far before.

"He hasn't paid me anything," I said. It was just a dodge. Helen knew. At least I was honest with her always. "But," I said, "if he sells the horse I get five per cent. It doesn't hurt anyone. It just helps someone. Don't you see?"

"No," she said. "I don't." I suppose that when you're upset you do silly things. I did that night. We drove down on the shore after that dinner—away down to where there was no road and wheel-tracks ran off into the sand. The breeze was very soft overhead and it ruffled Helen's hair as she sat there beside me.

I kissed her and said, "When are you going to break down and marry me? I love you. You know that."

She was very close beside me, and as I looked down at her she was crying. "What's the matter?" I said.

I should have known. I guess I did, really. The moonlight doesn't change those things. "I can't, Nick," she said. "I can't marry you." Her face came up to mine and it turned me over inside, seeing those tears. "Oh, you know that I love you. We've both known. Only—I just can't!"

"Because of to-day," I said, "of that stuff?" And she nodded.

"Maybe it's silly of me, Nick," she said. "We both know our way around. We've both had to take care of ourselves for years. Maybe that's it. Maybe it's because we've seen so much of these things that are—are smart and sharp and clever and—and faded. Maybe it's because we've seen so much of it that I don't want it for us. I want it bright and clear and clean for us, Nick. And not crooked."

I sat up quickly, then, my arms dropping from her. Words are funny things, the way they hit you. That word crooked.

"I'm not crooked," I said. "No one can say I am."

She looked at me, and the moment was gone. Maybe it was gone for good—forever.

"I think it's crooked to take money for a

blue ribbon that a horse doesn't deserve," she said quietly.

"Listen," I said, "that's not the way it is. That's not the point. I thought I—?" Then I stopped. I shrugged. "What's the use?" I said.

I started the car and drove her home and left her at her flat. I went home and sat there for a while, saying good-bye to a lot of things that were awfully important to me. To the hopes and plans for a little place in the country, with Helen and maybe a couple of kids that I could ride with and make them pals. You get lonely for that, after a while. I was thirty now, and most of those years had been tough, with a father and mother who had broken up when I was twelve and with my own line to ride.

Horses were all I'd ever really known since I was fourteen—horses and the pros. They had been my crowd, my friends. Good chaps, most of them, but with no money and getting sharper because they had no money.

I'd slept in stalls, and walked hot horses, and rode the flimsy ones that turned over with you once or twice a day, and finally I rode in the shows. Then came a job in an insurance office and, at last, a judging card and a chance to lay away a little cash—if I played the game. And I played it for two reasons.

First, because I was on the pros' side. They were my crowd. I knew them, what they were up against.

My second reason was that I couldn't see how it hurt anyone. I never did anything raw. Nothing that you couldn't stretch a few points and justify, but when there was a chance I threw it the right way. It didn't hurt anyone, except—and I had to smile wryly, sitting there in the dark—except maybe me, if I lost Helen.

I didn't see Helen for the next two weeks. I didn't call her. And I didn't do much at the office. I wanted to be alone. Mickey Tor had a place in the hunting country and I went out there. He gave me a horse and I wandered around the countryside by myself.

I had ridden far, loafing along on a good horse, and, after an hour, I was lost. And it didn't matter—until my horse pricked up his ears and stood looking into the open woods. A horse and rider were coming out towards me. I waited. It was a kid—a girl.

She had on dungarees, a blue shirt with the sleeves rolled up, and her hair was one of those easy-to-care-for bobs, and she wasn't any special beauty.

Thirteen or fourteen, I guessed, and you just had to grin back at her and feel good. Because she had a snub nose with freckles on it and a wide mouth and brown eyes that were just as friendly as a pup's. A good kid, having a good time on a horse that you wouldn't have turned your head to look at.

He was a dark and rusty grey old horse, with a pair of eyes that were quiet and lazy-happy, and he was having fun, too. He could have been cleaner, and he could have been clipped up, but he couldn't have been more relaxed or having a better time. Neither of them could.

"Hello," she said, with that grin, and I said, "Hello," and her old grey horse got his nose into the grass.

"Aren't you pretty far out?" I said, and she shrugged.

"Oh, no," she said, unconcerned. "Topper and I come out here all the time."

"Alone?" I said, and she nodded. Then she frowned.

"There's only one trouble—I'm not allowed to jump when I'm alone." She looked at me. "Are you alone?" she asked. I said I was.

"Would you like to jump a few?" she said eagerly. "Just a run or two?" I had to grin again, she was so keen.

"Why, sure," I said, and she gathered her reins.

"Topper loves to jump," she confided. "Do you want to go first?" She wanted to go first, obviously.

"No, you," I said. "I'll follow. You know the country." She was up there now, thrilled, and the old horse seemed to feel it, too, and they were off across the field. For the next half-hour, I had more fun than I had ever had before in all my life.

That old grey horse hit a hunting pace—a steady, long and sure, ground-eating pace.

Please turn to page 10

Page 9





MY HAIR NEVER GETS  
THAT DRY FRIZZY LOOK AFTER  
A CREST HOME PERMANENT  
AND IT REALLY LOOKS  
NATURALLY CURLY

says Charming  
Canadian Pacific Hostess

*Betty Herperger*



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I HAD to ride hard to keep in sight. I watched that grey horse until I almost forgot my own.

The grey horse never made a mistake; he never came close to one. He was in right every time, and he jumped steady and sure, and his head was out on a loose rein, and he was always looking for the next fence. He was having the time of his life, and so was I.

I thought: Gee, to have a kid of my own and to do this with her and have her grow up this way—isn't that your dream? And it was. Give a kid a horse she can trust and that trusts her, and you've built something. After about three miles and fifteen fences, she slowed and waited for me.

Her eyes were sparkling bright and the grey horse wasn't even puffing. I was. We walked along, and when I got my breath I said, "That horse of yours is one of the best across country that I've ever seen. Have you had him long?"

She rumbled his stringy mane. "Seven years," she told me. "Since I was six. We taught each other to jump."

"Do you hunt on him?" I asked.

"Oh, yes," she said, "all the time." She frowned a little. "My mother," she said—"that is, my stepmother—doesn't like me to hunt him."

"Why not?" I said. She patted the grey horse's neck again. "She says," she explained, "that he's too homely. That he looks funny in the field with all the stylish horses."

I gave one snort, disgusted. "Look," I said, "I shouldn't go against your stepmother, but I know horses and you keep that one. He may not be the showiest one in the world, but he won't let you down. He'll take care of you, always. And that's the most important thing there is. You hang on to him."

And her face went down against that lanky old grey neck and there was a look in her eyes that caught your throat. "Oh, I will," she said. "I'll keep you always, won't I, Topper?"

I dropped behind. I wasn't seeing too good—just for a second. We came to a fork in the trail, and she stopped.

"I go this way," she said, "and—thank you. It was fun. Maybe—maybe we can do it again sometime."

"I'd like to," I said, and she went off down the lane, throwing me that last smile. The little grey was bustling in his walk, thinking of his oats ahead. I went on back to Mickey Tor's. Mickey was there, waiting for me.

Mickey Tor was a wiry, lightweight guy, about my age, always in riding clothes. There were a lot of things about the Mick that I didn't like, but his courage wasn't one of them.

He'd broken most of his

## The Faded Blue

Continued from page 9

bones riding the leapers, the steeplechasers, and he was always just a jump or two ahead of the grain bill. I guess not having money makes you stretch a point now and then. But he could ride. That was his life, his business.

Give him a horse, let him school it for a while, and then, when he was in the saddle, it would perform. That is, for him it would. Not for every rider. He was a showman. He knew his stuff.

I didn't tell him what had happened to me. He wouldn't have understood. And he had something on his mind. There was no one else around.

"Look," he said, "they're having a show at the Hunt Club in a couple of weeks. I think we can get it for you. Want it?"

"Okay," I said absently, stripping the saddle from my horse. I wasn't thinking about judging shows at the moment. I was thinking about the kid, about how I'd like to talk to Helen about her, about my afternoon. Then I noticed the Mick watching me with that wise grin.

"All right," I said, straightening up, "what's the story?"

"Come out in three or four days and I'll show you," he said. He had something hidden out. I went home, thinking about Helen. But I didn't call her . . .

I went back to the Mick's a few afternoons later, and he brought out the filly. She was a pretty thing, a chestnut lightweight. Short back, good bone up front, a chest and a neck that had lines and that fitted at both ends, a nice sloping shoulder — everything. Class. I looked her over. And, suddenly, I didn't like her.

I didn't trust her somehow. It was in her head, especially her eyes. They were small and narrow, they didn't bug out, and they were too close together, with a look in them that told me she'd be flighty, that when you needed her most she'd fall apart. You can't always put those things in words, you feel them.

"Uh-huh," I said to Mick, "showy. Very showy. Get her braided up and she'd be hard to beat. For looks."

The Mick walked the filly out and towards his practice course. I followed. The filly moved all smooth and dainty. And the Mick took her around.

His schooling course is not an easy one. Stone walls, log-topped, some stiffish posts and rails, a ditch or two, a coop that takes a little climbing. But the filly cleared them all. She didn't stop at one. It was a perfect show—to the average spectator. Only I wasn't average.

I saw that her ears weren't up and that she wasn't looking at her jumps, not carefully, not

eagerly. She was waiting for the Mick, doing the things because he was making her and not because she loved it. Not like that old grey horse had done.

I didn't want this filly for myself, not for a tough place, not where she'd have to think for herself. No. Sooner or later she'd let you down, she'd pile you up at a jump. Those things you know, after years. And Mickey Tor brought her back to me.

"She can perform, can't she?" he said, and I nodded. Yes, she could perform. The Mick looked down at me.

"I think," he said, "that I can get her sold. If," and his eyes were tight on mine, with that flick of grin, "if she should do well at the Hunt Show coming up." I looked away from him.

"They called you about that show, didn't they," he said, "about judging it?"

"Yes," I said, "they called me." He waited for a minute and then he took the filly on into the stable and I got in my car and drove away.

The Hunt Show came up ten days later, on a Saturday. It was a perfect day, cool, with bright sunlight, and just a cloud or two scudding high. I drove on out alone.

It wasn't a big show, just medium, but the crowd was gathering, bringing their picnic lunches, scattering on the hill-tops, parking their cars close to the ringside.

I looked for Helen, but I didn't see her. Somehow I thought she might be there. I hoped so. They gave me my judge's badge, introduced my ringmaster, and at ten sharp we started.

The morning stuff wasn't much. A walk-trot class or two, even some palominos. All right, but not what the real crowd would come to see in the afternoon — the hunting stuff. And Helen still wasn't anywhere in the crowd, so far as I could see.

I kept thinking about her and about Mickey Tor and that chestnut filly, the filly with the tricky eyes that I would have to judge that afternoon. Then it was twelve o'clock, the luncheon recess, and I was walking up to the luncheon tent—that's when it happened to me.

I'd had that kid on my mind, too, the one that I'd gone larking with that day—the kid with that old grey hunter. They were all wrapped up in the way I was feeling, and it wasn't good. And then, suddenly, I saw the kid. There in front of me in a big field. She was mounted on Mickey Tor's filly, the chestnut filly.

"Hello," I said, "remember me?" and that smile broke out across her face like warm sun.

Please turn to page 26

### IN AND OUT OF SOCIETY!



By RUD



Great news for men....

# Pelaco Whites Introduce the new *Triplelife* collar



There are now 2 very desirable Pelaco Whites: your fashionable favourite — the standard white and the long-awaited Triplelife with the revolutionary, long-lasting collar.

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FOCUS

THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY — JUNE 25, 1952

Page 11



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Mrs. Ellen Tuck Astor

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## Editorial

Vol. 20, No. 4

June 25, 1952

### A GIRL WINS THE DAY

LAST week a 23-year-old girl was instrumental in getting the "sack" for eight of her "bosses."

She is Miss Dorothy Gallagher, delegate from the Auburn, N.S.W., branch to the Australian Labor Party's annual State conference.

Miss Gallagher's motion that no member of the N.S.W. Legislative Council should be allowed to serve on the A.L.P. executive was carried by the conference.

Miss Gallagher, who until 18 months ago had never made a political speech, was the heroine of the day.

We are more interested in Dorothy herself than we are concerned with her political views.

For 50 years and more feminists have been saying, "We should have more women in Parliament," "Women should be in this board or that council."

And yet so little has been achieved.

The point is that no parliament or board or council needs a woman just because she is a woman.

A woman who wants to enter public life must be as well trained as a man. Many think it is a good idea for a woman to be even better trained.

She can best equip herself for public life by taking part in local government affairs or by joining a political party.

She must be willing to give years of service to her party or association.

For a long time women have been battering at the door of men's citadels, yet few have gained admission.

It would be smarter strategy to sneak up on them.

### OUR COVER

This is the second time that Elaine Baglin (nee Brodie), of Sydney, who was photographed in the snow at Kosciusko, has appeared on our cover. In May last year she appeared on the cover in our "undiscovered Australian beauties" series. That shot was also taken by her husband, professional photographer Douglas Baglin, who was then her fiance.

### This week:

● The first of our full-length novels for winter-night reading, "Heaven Knows, Mr. Allison," runs uninterrupted from page 43 to page 61. We are particularly proud to be bringing you this absorbing story by Australian author Charles Shaw, which in its book form is a best-seller at 14/6 a copy.

● Cabled news in the daily papers that young Donald Irving Copp had secured a position as a footman at Buckingham Palace came as a complete surprise to his family, who live at Port Lincoln, S.A. There's a story about Donald opposite. His father, Detective-Sergeant A. E. Copp, now retired, received two honorable mentions and two special mentions during his police service. Like Donald, who was an extra in the Italian Opera Company in Australia, Copp senior is a singer.

### Next week:

● For spectacle and fun there's hardly anything to beat the circus, and the two pages of color pictures we will publish next week have captured all the glamor that is to be found under the big top. Our cover shot, which was also taken at the circus, fairly leaps at you. It is of a tiger.

● Not many people know how to cook eggplant (or aubergine), those glossy purple, fruit-like vegetables that look so attractive in greengrocers' shops. Treated right, and that is not difficult, they have a delicious, bland taste. Next week in a special color cookery feature we will tell you how to prepare eggplant, and also how to cook stuffed green peppers and stuffed squash.

● Another entertaining color feature we have lined up is a preview of the movie "Scaramouche," which stars Stewart Granger and Mel Ferrer in doublet and hose and Janet Leigh and Eleanor Parker in crinolines and wimples.

## BOOK REVIEW

By BETTY BEST

**AUTOBIOGRAPHIES**  
by well-known authors are frequently packed with details of a meteoric or struggling rise to fame, are sprinkled with names of famous friends, and contain advice to would-be writers.

It is therefore a refreshing change to find Lloyd Douglas' "Time to Remember" a quiet, restful book of family life, relying on intimate human detail and a keen, observant wit for its appeal.

Douglas was the author of such popular novels as "Magnificent Obsession" and "The Robe."

His books, though non-sectarian, have strong religious themes and plenty of drama. The contrast of the simple country life of his boyhood under the strict but loving discipline of his Lutheran minister father may come as a shock to many of his readers.

Mr. Douglas was 71 when he wrote his last novel. He was a tired man half-crippled with arthritis.

Bedridden much of the time, he had decided to give up his writing because there was

nothing more he wanted to say.

After a year of idleness he felt very much worse and his doctor insisted that he must get back to writing as a sort of mental occupational therapy. His book of reminiscences is the result.

Written without a deadline to meet, it is a leisurely account of his life from childhood to the age of 20, interspersed with commonsense and friendly philosophy.

Above all a tolerant man, Lloyd Douglas is not afraid to speak his mind when a moral issue is at stake.

Quite capable of keeping pace with the times, Mr. Douglas makes it very clear that

much of present-day outlook is not to his liking.

Modern child psychology in particular comes in for his criticism.

Both his mother and father had been schoolteachers in the days when good manners and obedience were expected from all pupils, dull or brilliant.

This training was, if anything, accentuated in their home.

"Had I ever talked back to my papa or my mama," says Mr. Douglas, "in the same tones and terms commonly tolerated to-day by indulgent parents, there would have been a prompt laying-on of hands."

For those who remember a similar upbringing with gratitude, "Time To Remember" will have the charm of a rummage through the attic of your childhood home and an hour or so with the family album on a wet Sunday afternoon.

It is only the first half of Mr. Douglas' autobiography, because, a few months after it had gone to the publishers, he died at the age of 74.

"Time To Remember" is published by Peter Davies. Our copy from Angus and Robertson.

TIME TO REMEMBER  
By  
Lloyd Douglas

#### The Australian Women's Weekly

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# He hopes he'll dance with the Queen

By ANNE MATHESON, of our London staff

The fervent hope of Donald Irving Copp, the young Australian who has been appointed junior footman at Buckingham Palace, is that next Christmas he will still be the youngest member of the Royal Household and so will have the honor of a dance with the Queen.

It is a tradition in the Royal Family that at the servants' Christmas dance at the Palace the Queen leads the dancing with the most junior page or footman.

**H**ANDSOME, twenty-three-year-old Donald Irving Copp is six feet tall, slender, and fair-haired. He is the younger son of (retired) Detective-Sergeant A. E. Copp, of Port Lincoln, South Australia.

Donald took up duties at Buckingham Palace two weeks before Ascot, then moved to Windsor Castle in attendance on Her Majesty for the first Royal Ascot of her reign.

Later Donald travels with the Royal Household to Holyrood Castle when the Queen holds Court in Scotland. At the end of the season he will go to Balmoral in attendance on the Royal Family at their highland holiday retreat.

Donald Copp achieved a life's ambition when he received his Royal appointment, was fitted for his red Royal Household livery, and moved into his footman's room at the Palace.

"I have been interested in the Royal Family all my life," he told me. "I saved hard to come to England in the hope that I might be of service to the Queen."

"It will be my proudest moment when I attend Her Majesty on the Royal drive to Ascot."

He received his Royal appointment two days after an interview with Sir Piers Leigh, Master of the Queen's Household.

"I told Sir Piers Leigh of my interest in the Royal Family and how much I wanted to serve them," said Donald.

"He took up all my references, particularly character references."

Donald Copp's interest in the Royal Family was fostered by an elder sister, Mrs. Geoffrey Hawthorne, of Port Lincoln, who keeps a photograph album of the Royal Family and has pasted in pictures of the Queen since the Queen's childhood.

"I would never have had the patience to keep such a book myself," he told me. "But I revelled in my sister's work."

On his first day at Buckingham Palace Donald was escorted three times round the Palace's 750 rooms.

"It was the most wonderful experience, but a very tiring one," he said.

"I cannot find words to describe the breathtaking beauty of the State rooms—the ball-

room, throne room, Chinese room, and the wonderful collections of china and paintings."

On his first on-duty day at the King's door at the Palace Donald received the Duke of Windsor, and on his departure handed him into his car.

"He smiled as I closed the door," the footman said, "and I lost my feeling of shyness immediately."

Donald has two constant fears. One is that he might drop a tea or coffee tray, for he has been warned that the china is always valuable and often priceless.

The other is that he will get lost in the vast building. But while he is still under training there is little chance of this happening, as he is always accompanied by another footman.

One of the greatest difficulties of a young footman at Buckingham Palace, Donald confessed, was to refrain from staring at the Queen and members of the Royal Family.

"I find it hard to resist looking through the window when I see the Queen, so natural, so young and beautiful, playing with her dogs near the summer house early in the morning," he said.

But staring is absolutely forbidden, and Donald has learned from the senior footman how to incline his head when Royalty passes him in the corridors of the Palace.

Donald has been in attendance at dinner on Queen Elizabeth and the Queen Mother, although he is too junior yet to be allowed to wait at table.

He serves coffee from the Chinese kitchen, but the page leading the serving and the footman on duty receive the coffee at the doors to the Royal suites.

## Gradual changes

CHANGES are very gradual at Buckingham Palace.

The china still carries the cipher of King George VI.

"The coffee cups which the late King insisted on having heated first are still warmed before serving," Donald said.

Donald finds the food very simple.

"It is no more elaborate than the food in the average Australian home," he said. "But it is served elaborately, and the silver and table appointments are exquisite."

He was surprised to find that



RECENTLY APPOINTED junior footman at Buckingham Palace, Donald Copp in his red Royal Household livery. Donald, a South Australian, achieved a cherished ambition when he entered the service of the Queen.

in a day he walks 12 or 14 miles.

Hours on duty are very long—14 at a stretch—but there are days off to compensate.

Donald's room at the Palace has wall-to-wall green carpet, hot and cold water, and concealed lighting.

His window overlooks the Palace gardens and he has a wonderful view of London.

"Everything goes like clockwork at the Palace, with minute-to-minute timing," he said.

His great joy was to find that busy as the Queen's life is in the short London season following Court mourning she has time to inquire of the new footman how he likes life at the Palace.

The staff are always advised of the Queen's official engagements. But Princess Margaret and the Queen Mother, who dine together each evening, have a less official programme, and the young footman on duty saw more of them during his first week.

"Princess Margaret looks so beautiful in a black evening dress," he said.

"She often hums a tune as she comes down the corridor to dinner and will sometimes inquire from one of the older Palace servants after one of the others."

Donald's enterprise in applying for and getting a job as a footman in the Royal Household has not surprised his friends.

Though he's a quiet, un-

assuming young man, he is not really diffident.

Liking music and the theatre, he applied for a job as an extra with the Italian Grand Opera Company when they were in Australia. He sang in the chorus of most of their productions.

Until he entered Her Majesty's service, however, Donald spent his working life as a booking clerk.

In Port Lincoln he worked for a shipping firm. He left in August, 1950, for Sydney, where he joined the travel bureau of a big city department store.

The bureau manager told a staff reporter in Sydney:

"Don impressed me as a steady, conscientious worker with a particularly determined streak and an ability to get on with any job he set himself."

"From the moment he planned his trip to Europe he kept to a strict austerity campaign."

"He saved every penny of his fare and enough to give him a few weeks in Europe."

For the 18 months he was in Sydney Donald lived in one room, surrounded by his favorite Van Gogh prints, and he spent most of his spare time with his record collection.

Before sailing from Sydney, Donald planned his trip in detail.

He often told his colleagues how much he was longing to hear famous European orchestras.

He visited Italy, Switzerland, and France before arriving in London.

ON ONE of Sydney's sunniest days Miss Lois Morratt became Mrs. John Olson of Ocean Beach, Manly. It was in Manly's blue surf that Lois first met John—the surf that showed her lovely clear complexion in all its natural beauty, and played cupid to this lovely Pears Bride.



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# She knows her Hollywood



ANITA LOOS as she was about the time she wrote "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes." She is now 59, but has changed remarkably little, still retaining her bobbed hair.

## Anita Loos' novel complete next week

Anita Loos, author of "A Mouse Is Born," which will appear complete in The Australian Women's Weekly next week, is at present in Paris working on a stage adaptation of a French novel.

"A Mouse Is Born" is Miss Loos' first novel in 27 years. Her previous books were the famous "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" and "But Gentlemen Marry Brunettes."

"A MOUSE is Born" is a witty story of life in Hollywood.

Because it is so up-to-the-minute in its appeal, we are giving it to you next week in place of the novel previously announced.

Few people could know the movie city better than Miss Loos. She worked as a script-writer for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer for 18 years before she left for New York five years ago to turn her attention to the stage.

Miss Loos has seen both the comic and tragic side of Hollywood, and both are in "A Mouse Is Born."

It is the story of a film-star, known popularly as "The Bust," told in letters addressed to her unborn child.

A new and exciting addition to the list of complete novels which will appear in The Australian Women's Weekly is "Murder in the Family," by Mary Hastings Bradley.

Other books are "Deborah," by Marian Castle, and "The Great Gatsby," by Scott Fitzgerald.

Last year Miss Loos completed the adaptation of "Gigi" from the novel by French author Gabrielle Collette.

"Gigi" had a highly successful six months' run in New York. It introduced English

actress Audrey Hepburn to America.

The play has closed temporarily because Miss Hepburn had a prior contract which called for her services in Italy.

"Gigi" will reopen in New York in October.

"Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" was a tremendous hit in the mid-'twenties and had a highly successful Broadway revival two years ago.

Anita Loos wrote it to amuse herself on a train trip in 1924.

Since then it has earned more than a million dollars. Lorelei Lee, the blonde gold-digging heroine of "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes," is the epitome of the jazz-and-flapper age of the 'twenties.

For those who experienced at first hand the novelty and excitement of those years, "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" rises like a memorial stone to faded glories.

It is sad for them to think that the impact of The Blonde on a receptive public will never have its like again.

The Blonde has, however, come to stay. She has become a historical fact, and while there is power in the cliché her achievements will be perpetuated.

As a reference for rising generations she is enshrined in the pages of the Oxford Book of Quotations, where, under the



MISS LOOS returned to the costume and atmosphere of the 'twenties at a spectacular party French dress-designer Jacques Fath gave last year.

name of her creator, Anita Loos, there is the entry "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes."

From time to time during the years Lorelei, "ghosted" by Miss Loos, has reappeared on the scene to make her pungent comments on contemporary society.

On the eve of the 'fifties she came to light with a "scientific" discussion on the probable return of the flapper, which was published in "The New York Times Magazine."

Her conclusions were that the modern girl did not have a chance of duplicating the success of the flapper of the 'twenties mainly because the ingredients of that success — prohibition, bootleg gin, and jazz — were missing.

"The girls of to-day," she said, "sit in cocktail bars in a comparative state of sobriety. And instead of indulging in the conversation of the 'twenties, which consisted of cheery catch phrases of the order of 'Boop-boop-a-doop' or 'So's your old man,' they spend their time conversing about topics like the 'Passing of Democracy' and the 'Future of the Soviet Republic,' which do not really inspire gaiety."

Although she has naturally become identified with the era she chronicled, no one could be less like a relic of the 'twenties than Miss Loos.

A neat, dark-haired, dark-eyed little woman with a windblown bob, at 59 she looks to be in her late thirties.

She does not drink, and never has, and she prefers to walk than to use a car.

Her best working hours are from 3.30 or 4.30 a.m. to mid-day, and she goes to bed when most people are just finishing their dinner.

Miss Loos has been a pro-

fessional writer all her life.

At the age of 12, while still in sailor-suit and pigtails, she was writing film scripts at 15 dollars a piece.

At the same time she won a prize for a school essay in which she outlined her ambition to become a ship's architect.

She won so many prizes from the New York "Evening Telegram" that the newspaper eventually put her on a salary to write a humorous column.

Born in California, the birthplace of the film industry, Miss Loos' interest in writing for films was given a start when her father, theatrical producer Richard Loos, began operating a motion picture theatre in between his stock productions.

In her father's theatrical company, too, she first became acquainted with the stage, and at a very early age appeared as Little Lord Fauntleroy.

In 1919 she married John Emerson. It was Miss Loos' second marriage. While at high school she had eloped with an orchestra leader.

As a husband-and-wife team they worked together on the script of the first film satire, "His Picture in the Papers," starring Douglas Fairbanks, sen. They continued producing scenarios for Fairbanks for three years.

For a time they had their own film unit, the John Emerson-Anita Loos Productions.

Then they went over to Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in Hollywood, where they produced scripts for such well-known films as "Red Headed Woman," "Blossoms in the Dust," "San Francisco," "The Women," and "I Married an Angel."

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Bon Ami Cleanser gets the dirt, cuts grease fast, but never, never scratches! Instead, it makes sinks, baths — even pots and pans — shine like new! Try this grit-free cleanser today. See why millions of women won't use any other!

The safe, speedy cleanser

**BON AMI**

"hasn't scratched yet!"

NOW—She's Exciting

—Got ZIP & GLOW—and plenty of beaux

Don't envy her charm or radiant health! Make it yours the way thousands of pale, listless, anemic people are doing—with Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. By revitalizing and enriching your bloodstream, Dr. Williams' Pink Pills may bring you new pep, energy, joy in life—often in only 30 days. So start to-day! Get back "in the pink" with

DR. WILLIAMS' PINK PILLS





# SKI SEASON OPENS AT MOUNT KOSCIUSKO

Snow fell early at Australia's skiing fields this year. Hundreds of skiers are setting out for snow sports resorts.

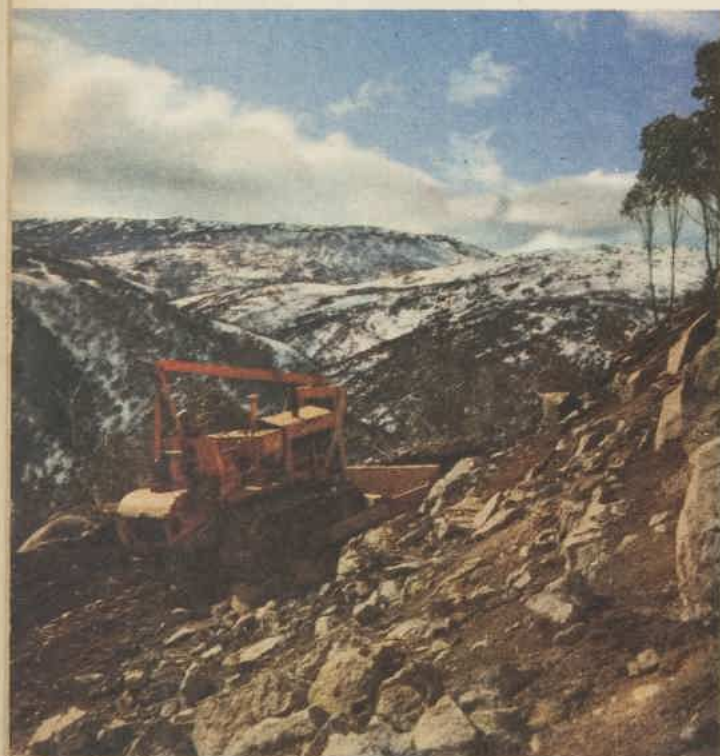
At Kosciusko, N.S.W., skiers will see something of the Snowy Mountains Hydro Electric Scheme construction works, some of which are shown in these pictures by Douglass Baglin. Mrs. Baglin posed for the cover shot.



BEAUTIFUL JINDABYNE township on the Snowy River, where tourists bound for Kosciusko often halt, will be engulfed by the waters of a dam within the next ten years as part of the Snowy Mountains Hydro Electric Scheme, biggest undertaking of its kind in Australia.



ROADS built in connection with the hydro-electric scheme will also open up vast areas of wonderful new snow country. Here a tractor is working on Munsang Road in the Snowy River area. Many new Australians working on the project enjoy snow sports.



POPULAR ski-runs like this, left, are being torn up by construction gangs as the Snowy Mountains Scheme progresses. The scheme will take at least 25 years.

RUINS of the Hotel Kosciusko, which was burnt down last year. Built mainly of wood, it was erected in 1901. Nearby is the popular "Grand Slam" ski-run.





**SNOWMOBILES** leave the Chalet, above, for Smiggins Holes, where they pick up supplies and new arrivals. These tractor-wheeled vehicles are capable of high speed with heavy loads in the snow.

**ROADSIDE** poplars between Cooma and Jindabyne are much admired by tourists on their way to Kosciusko. Berry hedges also provide a contrast in coloring to the native alpine gums.



**SKIERS** gaze across the slow-freezing Spencers Creek to the snow-capped hills which overlook some of the grandest scenery in the Australian Alps. Spencers Creek, 5900 feet above sea level, also figures in the Snowy scheme.

**JOHN ABBOTTSLEIGH**, below, who lives at Smiggins Holes, takes his daughter Fay for a dog-drawn sleigh ride. Their alpine home is seen in the background. Children who live in the snow country are experts on skis at an early age.





**TO ALL SINGLE GIRLS..**

*it's so much easier when you know*

**Meds**

**INTERNAL SANITARY PROTECTION**

"Is it really safe to use Meds?" Once this was a common question from single girls. To-day it is not so often asked because more and yet more girls know that the answer is yes! Here are the facts: A recent American national survey of 900 leading gynaecologists and obstetricians indicates that medical specialists overwhelmingly find Meds safe for normal women. Medical literature shows that any normal fully grown girl can use Meds. Invented by a physician, tampons are regularly worn by thousands of registered nurses. Meds completely do away with the need for sanitary belts. Chafing, uncomfortable bulk and a revealing line are all eliminated. You, too, can have the new freedom, the self-assurance, the poise that only Meds can give. "Next time" try Meds. In fact, buy a packet now and be ready! Don't deprive yourself of this wonderful Meds freedom any longer. If you want any further information, cut out and post the coupon below to Nurse Reid, Johnson & Johnson, Box 3331, G.P.O., Sydney, for this FREE Meds booklet—it will help you towards greater comfort—and tells all about safe internal sanitary protection.

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Please post me, in plain wrapper, the FREE Meds booklet.

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WW 2/6/52

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**LARYNOIDS**

containing instant-acting ANESTHESIN

**for COUGHS COLDS SORE THROATS**

**24 AT ALL CHEMISTS**

**STUBBORN INDIGESTION?**

**Famous English Treatment!**

Maclean Brand Stomach Powder has often relieved stomach pain and discomfort after many other treatments have failed. This formula is a modern treatment for Stomach trouble.

**MACLEAN BRAND STOMACH POWDER**

Instantly neutralises excess acid which is the cause of digestive disorder, then soothes the inflamed stomach lining, protecting it and enabling it to heal. Soon pain after meals, flatulence, heartburn and biliousness are things of the past. You can eat anything you like and feel good as new.

None genuine without this design and signature

**One dose relieves pain and discomfort**

Start treatment to-day. Obtainable from all Chemists.

# Some of my patients

## IMPATIENCE AS SYMPTOM OF ILLNESS

### ... DRY HEAT BEST FOR HERPES

"I SHOULD like to make an appointment for my wife," said Mr. McLeod a few days ago. "She could come along in your ordinary hours, but lately she has been so difficult and impatient that I think it would be better if you fixed a time to see her so that she does not have to wait."

I readily consented, although it meant some inconvenience for me, for patients so often have troubles of which we do not know till we see them, and if she were to be a long case she might hold up the surgery.

I had not seen her since her marriage, but I have attended her family for many years. She was a charming and vivacious girl, but even when she was young she was of a very nervous disposition and I had wondered then how life would treat her.

As she walked into my surgery to-night I knew she was really ill. She had become very thin, her eyes were staring, and she had a swelling in the neck.

Before I questioned her or examined her more closely I could tell she was suffering from thyrotoxicosis, often known as toxic goitre.

As the interview proceeded I found she had all the symptoms of this condition. She had been very cranky at home; despite a good appetite she had lost weight and even on the coldest of days she did not have to wear extra clothes.

Her pulse was rapid, her hands were hot and sweaty, and when she held them out in front of her there was a very fine tremor of her fingers. The other points all fitted in.

"You are suffering from thyrotoxicosis," I said to her.

"What does that mean, doctor?" she said.

"It is a big word, but really self-explanatory, Mrs. McLeod," I told her. "Normally the thyroid gland in your neck controls the rate at which your tissues live."

"In your case the gland is secreting so much hormone that your tissues can't stand the pace. We are going to have a test done on you to determine how over-active your thyroid is, and then tests done later will show how you are responding to treatment."

"Will I need an operation, doctor?"

"I was just coming to that, Mrs. McLeod," I said, "and the answer is, 'Probably not.' As recently as ten years ago operation to remove a large amount of the over-active gland tissue was our answer to this condition. Now, however, we have some drugs related to a chemical called thiouracil, which interfere with the manufacture of the thyroid hormone and by regulating its dose we can bring you back to normal."

"So just these tablets will fix me up, doctor?"

"Well, that is not the whole

story. Your condition is related also to anxiety and nervousness.

"For the first few weeks it would be better if you could go into hospital, but if we cannot arrange that you must have complete rest at home, both of body and mind, and eat all you can and then still more."

"After that you must avoid anxiety and worry for a period of about a year, by which time we hope to have you cured."

Thyrotoxicosis is a curious disease. It is most commonly found in women in the twenties. In the form which it took in Mrs. McLeod it is easy to diagnose.

### BY A DOCTOR

It is reported that Dr. Bell, of Edinburgh, whose great deductive ability Conan Doyle had in mind when he created Sherlock Holmes, diagnosed it in a woman by the tinkling of the sequins on her frock caused by her very fine tremor.

Frequently the diagnosis does not leap to the eye. In older people it often takes the form of a quiet poisoning of the heart muscle over a period of years and this generally requires surgery to cure.

"I FEEL perfectly furious," said pretty little Mrs. Perkins to me yesterday. "It is my wedding anniversary to-morrow and we are having a party, and look at my lip—I shall have a great herpes there by to-morrow."

"That rings a bell," I said, "Didn't I hear you had one a few days before you were married?"

"Yes, indeed, I did," was the doleful reply. "I have been getting them on and off for years, whenever I want to look

particularly nice, it seems to me."

"It is too bad," I said sympathetically, "but there's nothing much you can do about it."

"But why should I get them at all?"

"This variety of herpes is one which recurs frequently and probably will do so all your life," I said.

"It is caused by a virus infection which you contracted years ago. It always breaks out on or near the same spot, generally when you have a cold or you are run down. Perhaps you have been rushing round and getting overtired the last few days."

"I certainly have," said Mrs. Perkins, "but can I do anything to stop the blisters? Put on a few fomentations, perhaps?"

"Keep the area dry," I replied. "When you feel it starting to tingle, hold a hot pad there for about a quarter of an hour."

"You may heat the pad by ironing it with a very hot iron."

"But once the blisters appear do not apply heat in any form."

"Then you can use either an ointment, one of the drying zinc cream type, or you can keep the area dry by dabbing it frequently with alcohol."

"We can't do anything to stop the attacks of herpes coming, but at times we can abort the attack."

"Well, I just hope I don't get shingles—isn't that a form of herpes?" asked Mrs. Perkins.

"This would have no influence on it either way. They are absolutely different diseases," I said.

"This is well shown by the fact that whereas one attack of shingles or herpes zoster usually protects you from it for the rest of your life, many attacks, as I have explained to you, are the rule in the case of herpes simplex, which you have."

**Pamper**

**YOUR PRICELESS**

**SKIN WITH**



Once skin complaints start, they are difficult to check. Doctors recommend Wright's for the treatment and prevention of rashes and other skin troubles—Wright's is mild, yet cleansing.

Your skin is priceless—  
pamper it with

**WRIGHT'S**

**COAL TAR SOAP**

Ideal for Toilet and Nursery

**World's new**

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for relief of

**RHEUMATISM**

found in W.A.!

West Australians are enthusiastically acclaiming Stratton's Powder as the world's revolutionary medicine for the relief of Rheumatism. Unsolicited testimonials are pouring in daily. Grateful users are sending supplies to friends in other States and overseas. It is in response to urgent requests from these good people that we now offer this effective treatment on an Australia-wide basis. Stratton's Powder is proving successful where other and, in many cases, much more expensive medicines have failed. It attacks the cause of Rheumatism and so gives early relief in both mild and severe cases. You can be sure of Stratton's Powder. It contains no drugs and is harmless to take—easy, too—only one dose daily. Join the band of happy people who now sing the praises of Stratton's Powder. Send today to R. A. Stratton and Elliot Pty. Ltd., 181 St. George's Terrace, Perth, Western Australia, for a 4 weeks' supply carton, enclosing £1, plus 1/- for postage, etc.





# Ansell Rubber Mats

for a dozen-and-one household uses!

Colourful !



This is the "MAJOR"

—and it is a great personal safeguard if stood upon when ironing or handling any other electrical appliance. Use it as a Bath Mat or Car Mat, too. Size: 16" x 23 1/2"

Handy !



This is the "ALL-PURPOSE"

—and it has been especially designed for use as a Dish Draining Mat. It has many other household uses — and like the "Major", is shock-proof, too. Size: 13 1/2" x 21 1/2"

3 Useful Sizes !



Colourful, shock-proof Ansell Rubber Mats save you money because they help prevent costly accidents and breakages in the home. They are inexpensive to buy, too — budget-priced within the reach of every housewife. Ansell Rubber Mats are sturdily made to give years of faithful service. In their bright, mottled colours of red, blue and green, they will add a colourful touch to the brightness of **your** home. You'll find many, many uses for the "Major", "All-purpose" and "Junior". Buy one of each size today—you can afford to!



Money-saving too !

This is "JUNIOR"

—use in the sink or wash basin; it saves money by saving breakages—and it will protect **your** knees when scrubbing or gardening. Shock-proof, of course. Size: 9 1/2" x 14"



Obtainable from your favourite hardware, chain or general store



Protect your natural hand beauty by constantly wearing

## Ansell *crepe* Rubber Gloves !

Designed for **absolute** protection against acids, grease and dirt, Ansell Crepe Rubber Gloves give better than barehand efficiency. They will prevent dryness, cracking and chilblains —helping to retain that well-cared-for look. Buy a pair today.

Remember...you can't look young if your hands look old!



Warming Extra Blood Flow  
brings Quick relief from

## RHEUMATIC PAIN

Rheumatic pain and the agonies of fibrositis are quickly relieved by Sloan's Liniment. Just pat it on. No rubbing, no massaging. Sloan's Liniment induces a comforting, pain-relieving warmth by stimulating the circulation. Keep a bottle of Sloan's always handy, so that it is always available not only for stopping rheumatic pains but also as relief against the pain of such injuries as bruises, sprains, strains, injured muscles and aching, stiff joints. Never be without Sloan's!



**SLOAN'S** ONLY 2/9 A BOTTLE  
FAMILY LINIMENT  
AT ALL CHEMISTS

## For INDIGESTION or HEARTBURN QUICK-EZE act so quickly!

Mr. J. G. Nash, of Wayville, South Australia, says:

"Your Quick-Eze have been a great help to me. They act so quickly when taken for indigestion or heartburn that I have had no hesitation in recommending them to all I know who suffer from these ailments."

"Even were they three times the price, I would still continue my practice of having a packet in the waistcoat pocket of all my suits."



Prepared to British Pharmacopoeia Codex standards for the quickest possible relief from:

INDIGESTION, HEARTBURN,  
FLATULENCE, DYSPESIA,  
ACID STOMACH

IN THE HANDIEST  
OF PACKS!

**QUICK-EZE** for INDIGESTION

## FOOT ITCH Helped 1st Day

Do your feet itch so badly that they nearly drive you crazy? Does the skin crack and peel? Are there blisters between your toes and on the soles of your feet? The real cause is a germ or fungus which you must kill to get rid of the trouble. At last it is possible to end these foot troubles with an American Hospital Discovery called Nigaderm. Nigaderm stops the itch in 7 minutes, kills germs and fungus, and in 24 hours the skin begins to heal clear and smooth. Get Nigaderm from your chemist to-day under positive guarantee to heal your foot itch or money back.

## MAKE YOUR OWN COUGH REMEDY!

Save money and get QUICK RELIEF. Just do this! Make a syrup of 1 tablespoonful of Treacle or Honey, 4 tablespoonful of Sugar, 1 tablespoonful of Table Vinegar, 1 breakfast-cup of warm water. Stir till dissolved. When cold pour into a large, clean empty bottle, add a 1/2 bottle of HEENZO Concentrate, shake well. This is equal to eight bottles of the best ready-mixed cough and cold medicine. HEENZO ACTS QUICKLY, SAFELY, EFFECTIVELY.

**HEENZO**  
For Coughs and Colds

# Star sportsman returns

## He's still the same Snowy Baker of old

By AINSLIE BAKER, staff reporter

A question that has plagued me since I grew up is: Why do so many people, many of whom have never seen my uncle, Snowy Baker—some of them not even born when he was last in Australia—still talk about him?

Snowy Baker's return from the U.S.A. to visit his homeland for the first time in 20 years has provided an answer.

OF necessity, it is only a brief visit, for Snowy is now his invalid wife's devoted companion.

Though he was suffering from the after-effects of air sickness when he arrived at Kingsford Smith Airport, he made an astonishingly quick recovery, a tribute to his physical fitness at the age of 68.

He is not very tall, but is broad-shouldered and still muscular and active, with a strong, lined face as brown as a bushman's.

I could realise that in his young manhood, with his famous fair hair, brilliant blue eyes, and magnificent physique, Snowy must have been the embodiment of the heroic, Olympic sportsman.

He did, in fact, represent his country at the 1908 London Olympic Games in boxing, swimming, and diving.

A legend even in his lifetime, Snowy Baker was the Hopalong Cassidy and Phantom Ranger of a past generation of Australian children.

Those were the "Bugs I be Snowy Baker" days among hero-worshipping small boys.

There were few of them who were not soon "learning boxing the Snowy Baker way" from his correspondence course, preparing for school sports by the application of lashings of Snowy Baker liniment, parting their hair in the centre in imitation of their idol, or attempting to develop an expanded chest measurement of 46 inches.

At the height of his still unequalled all-round sporting record as boxer, wrestler, swimmer, footballer, rower, water-polo player, and cavalry sports champion, he stood 5ft. 9 1/2 in. tall and weighed 12st.

To-day he is just a little lighter, a little stiffer perhaps in the back, but still firm in his hand-clasp and regard.

He keeps even now to the austere life of the athlete in training—"up at six, five hours in the saddle every day, and early to bed."

No one has ever seen Snowy drink or smoke and no one has ever heard him swear.

People still come up to me and say: "I remember the day Snowy jumped a horse into the Nepean from a train crossing the Camden Bridge"; "I was there the afternoon your uncle dived for a dare from the 80ft. cliffs at South Head."

Snowy Baker was born in Darlinghurst, N.S.W., in an old stone cottage standing in what was known as The Cow Paddock, on the high piece of land at the top of Forbes Street. He went to Crown Street school.

His father was an Irishman, George Baker, who had come to Australia from County Limerick by sailing ship to join the gold rush.

Seeing my Aunt Jean, my father, and Snowy together was a real flashback.

Aunt Jean surprisingly became "Sis," my father (Harold), "Sonno," and Snowy, "Reg."



SPORTS CHAMPION Snowy Baker, uncle of staff reporter Ainslie Baker, photographed on arrival in Sydney for a short visit to Australia.

His mother saw that he was always Reg in the family.

Snowy and my father, as boys, were so mad about horses that they used to go each morning to Rose Bay to help exercise the racehorses on the beach. After school they cleaned out the stalls.

Had they been asked to, they would gladly have paid for the privilege.

Snowy has no children of his own, although his marriage in 1909 to Mrs. Ethel Kearney, a noted horsewoman and widow of Dr. Gus Kearney, of Melbourne, one-time doubles partner of Sir Norman Brookes, provided him with two well-loved stepdaughters, Margot and Joan.

The death of Joan several years ago sent the sun out of Snowy's sky. It has never quite returned.

Snowy was no king of the kids by chance—he really loves them.

After more than 20 years as equestrian director of Hollywood's Riviera Country Club, Snowy still spends most of his time with the children's riding classes.

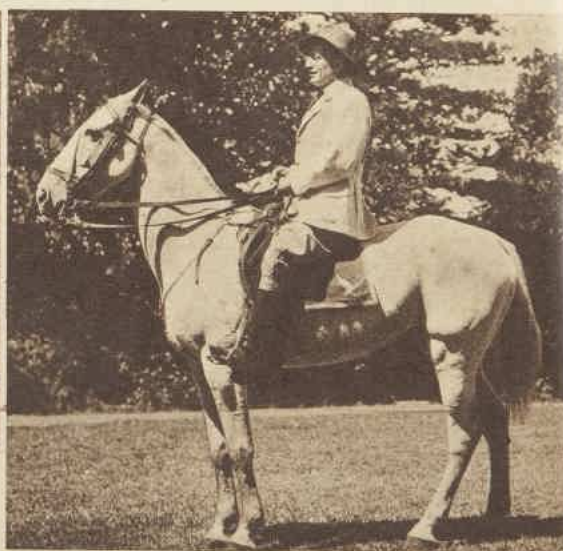
From what he says it emerges that they also learn to boil a billy Australian bushman fashion, play on a eucalyptus leaf, and crack a stock-whip.

For Snowy, bless his heart, after 34 years in America and nearly 50 years of limelight, remains irrevocably, indelibly, modestly Australian.

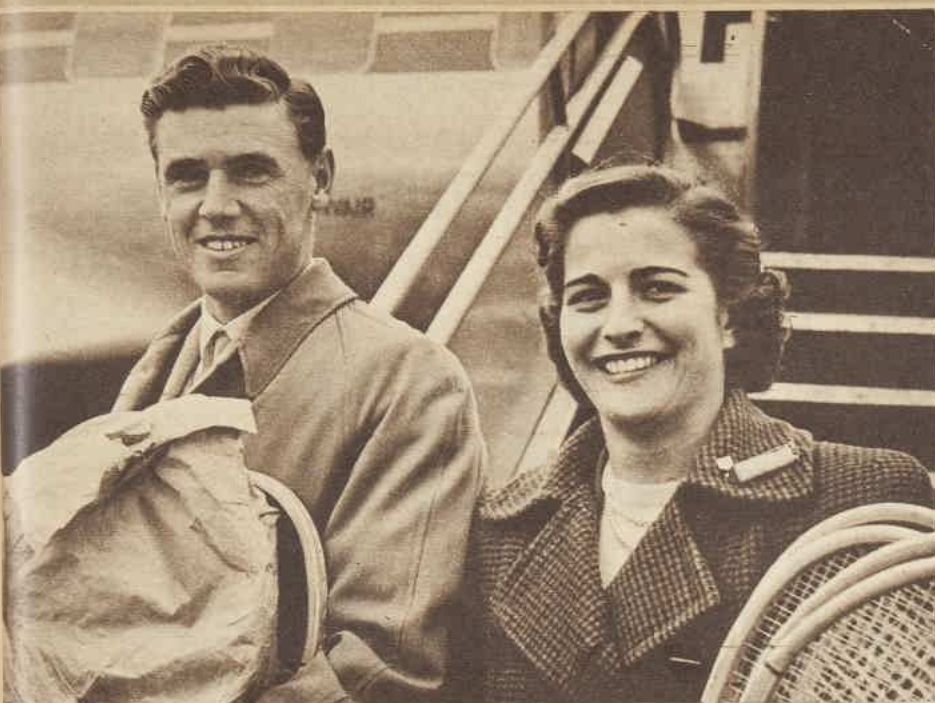
A reception by the Lord Mayor of Sydney and a Sportsman's Dinner at Tattersall's Club, Sydney, attended by 150 representatives of Australian sporting bodies, awaited him on his return.



SNOWY BAKER with silent film star Pauline Starke during the filming of "The Man From Kangaroo," which was made in Sydney in 1914. At right: Snowy on "Boomerang," the polo pony given to him in Limerick, Ireland, in 1905.







ARRIVAL IN ENGLAND. Mr. and Mrs. Frank Sedgman photographed at London Airport after a tour of Europe for the Continental tennis tournaments. Jean Sedgman, who wrote the accompanying article for us, says that Frank is still calm and unworried on the eve of the Wimbledon championship.

## Tennis ace calm on eve of big championship

Wimbledon — and Frank's fight for the world's biggest tennis championship — is suddenly only a few days ahead.

This last week of resting for it is the first real time I've had to sit down and rub my eyes about all that has happened since we arrived in Europe.

WE'VE rarely had more than a free day at a time between tournaments and exhibition matches. Though these have taken us all over the Continent, from the Mediterranean to Finland, as well as to England, it has been tennis all the way, with sightseeing only round the edges.

To be caught up in the swim of international tennis is to catch more planes and trains in a week than I used to do in a year. It means living in a suitcase, and shaking hands with a bewildering number of celebrities.

For me it has also meant hanging an array of travel-cased frocks at each stopping place, hoping for enough time to have one pressed before a sudden cocktail date or an evening's dancing.

I was very conscious of this on the French Riviera, which at any time of the day is like a fashion parade.

I was sitting on the sidelines watching Frank play at Beaulieu, feeling a little shy next to Somerset Maugham, the writer, when he paid me one of the nicest little gallantries I've had.

He turned to Pamela Churchill and said, "Guess who this is?" and he introduced me as though I were the celebrity.

But much is new and a little breathtaking to a young wife like me on her first trip to Europe.

Continental crowds, for instance, are astonishing.

The tennis stadium in Rome, built by Mussolini, is all in white marble and dotted with statues of muscled he-men.

We were ushered on to the centre court through a long underground tunnel which emerged into the arena. I felt like a Christian slave being herded into the lions' den.

The crowds were so excitable that their yells and barracking drowned the umpire.

They say Italian champions play best in Rome spurred on by this bellowing from their own crowd.

It happened again in France. Though Latin players may thrive on it, our boys couldn't play because of the noise.

At times the French crowd's hooting and disputing linesmen's decisions worked up to such a pitch that the umpire had to stand up on a perch and threaten to stop the match unless they calmed down.

One of the funniest incidents I've ever seen on a tennis court happened here.

Ulrich, a bearded Bohemian-looking Dane with a great shock of brown hair, was playing Belgium's Washer and losing. His hair kept flopping

over his eyes and he couldn't see.

All at once he nodded a curt signal to a friend on the sidelines. This man walked on to the court, pulled down Ulrich's tumbling locks with one hand, took a pair of scissors out of his pocket, and cut off a huge hank of hair, leaving Ulrich beaming from underneath a fringe.

There was a roar. Above it one of the American boys yelled for the whole stadium to hear:

"You ain't seen nothing yet. Wait till they snip the lace off Gussie's panties!"

After the excited Continental crowds it was refreshing to come to the polite handclapping of the tennis courts in England.

It was restful, too, not to take your life in your hands whenever you stepped into a taxi and spent the journey with your hands over your eyes as Frank and I did in Italy.

He said: "A trip in one of those is more exhausting than a five-set match."

I partnered Frank for the mixed doubles at Sutton and Bournemouth. On the court he was as protective and thoughtful as anywhere else, and reached over to take lots of shots that would have left me standing.

The papers noticed it. I woke up one day to find us in a front-page photo with Frank

snapped red-handed in a typical attitude, "poaching" outrageously.

But if you want my confession, that's really how we got as far as the Sutton semi-finals before Don Candy and Beryl Penrose beat us.

Here in England we've found a little flat—not a hotel—in a quiet square full of trees in Kensington.

Friends have lent us a car to make it easy for us to get to the Queen's Club and Wimbledon for practice.

There is quite a colony of tennis wives: Mrs. Eric Sturges, from South Africa, Mrs. Irvin Dorfman, and Vic Seixas' wife, Dolly Ann, with her deep-South drawl.

We usually sit together, and as none of us has been married more than a couple of years our place in the stands is getting the nickname of "The Brides' Box."

The American girls are very friendly and fun-loving. I chummed up with all of them—particularly Doris Hart and Shirley Fry.

All eyes are on Maureen ("Little Mo") Connolly, the sensation of this year's Wimbledon, and she seems as astonished and excited by her sudden leap into big tennis as anybody.

Mo is a typical teenager enjoying her first trip here, and is always the centre of any fun.

All the American girls are very anxious to come to Australia. They've heard much about it from Doris Hart and Louise Brough. But right now their eyes and their hopes, like ours, are on next week and Wimbledon.

I have a feeling I shall be doing most of the worrying. Frank is, as he always is, quiet, calm, and as unworried as if it were a Saturday afternoon knock-up.

By JEAN SEDGMAN

Healthy Hands...

even while you work — in factory, home, or garden

Dirt holds the threat of dermatitis—so keep your hands clean and healthy with "Barrier" Cream — another wonderful Faulding Product. Before that dirty job rub invisible, non-greasy "Barrier" Cream into your hands—after work your hands wash perfectly clean—no ingrained dirt, no skin roughness—no chance of dermatitis.

**BARRIER CREAM**

PREVENTS INDUSTRIAL DERMATITIS

"IF IT'S FAULDING'S — IT'S PURE"

"Wish I had another tooth!"



"I'd make splinters of this tough guy! And that tooth won't be long coming through! 'Chicken,' says Mummy, 'eat up your Vegemite and you'll soon have lovely strong teeth!' She says it's all that extra Vitamin B in Vegemite — you know, it contains more Vitamin B<sub>1</sub> than any other yeast extract manufactured and sold in Australia. I can use lots of B<sub>1</sub> — great stuff for curls, dimples, twinkles, and all. As for that Vegemite flavour — Crunch!"

niacin. Vegemite is a protective food, containing no starch. Adults need Vegemite too. Give it to them in sandwiches, soups and stews. A little does a power of good!

Young Mother Writes:



"Very early in baby's life, I commenced giving him Vegemite in milk. He hasn't looked back since."

Mrs. E. Butler, Brunswick, Vic.

Vegemite is a rich source of the complete Vitamin B complex, which includes

**Delicious**  
**VEGEMITE**  
richer, more economical

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The Sanitarium Children's

ABBREVIATED

# Australian Encyclopaedia

Completely revised! Fully authoritative! Brought right up to date by an army of experts!

The full Australian story! Tells you all you want to know about this great island continent!

**2'6**  
COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME



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WHEN this great educational work was first introduced more than 600,000 copies were sold within a few weeks! Even so tens of thousands of parents, teachers and children were disappointed. As a result it was decided to bring out this completely new, 1952 edition! Now coming off the presses after two years' work, it is one of the most amazingly comprehensive books on Australia ever published at any price! Re-written from cover to cover and brought right up to date by an army of experts, it contains over 100,000 words... more than 1,000 fascinating, fact-filled, fully authoritative articles about this great island continent! Nothing of importance omitted from its pages! No expense spared to make it one of the most valuable contributions to child education ever published in this country!

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Adelaide	Centipedes	Iron	Newcastle	Sapphire	Tiger Shark
A.I.F.	Coal	Jenolan	New Guinea	Scorpions	Tobruk
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Artesian	Crickets	Kingford-Smith	Onslow,	Sharks	Waders
Water	Dairying	Koala	Arthur	Shearing	Wallaby
Australia,	Dingo	Kosciuszko	Opal	Snakes	Waratah
H.M.A.S.	Dog-Fish	Kurradjong	Opossums	Southern	Warrigal
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Bandicoots	Flying Fish	Lasseter	Pinchgut	Spinifex	Whaler Shark
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Black Trackers	Friar-Birds	Lawson	Platypus	Sturt, Chas.	Wombat
Blamey, Sir T.	Galah	Lizards	Pythons	Sting-Rays	Wombats
Bluebottles	Gallipoli	Lotus	Quandong	Sugar	Wool
Blue	Gold	McArthur,	R.A.A.F.	Swan	Wren
Mountains	Grasses	John	R.A.N.	Sydney	Yabbie
Boomerangs	Hughes,	Magpies	Reptiles	Tank Stream	Yellow-Tail
Bredman	W. M.	Mangrove	Rodents	Tasmania	Etc., etc.
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SANITARIUM HEALTH FOOD COMPANY



## FOOD TAKES A JOURNEY

The food you swallow takes an amazing journey... occupying 2 or 3 days, and covering a distance of 30 or 40 feet! Unless this traffic is kept moving constantly, your digestion becomes disorganised. Then you feel out-of-sorts, tired, irritable: all symptoms of constipation. But there's nothing like a sparkling glass of Andrews Liver Salt to prevent sluggishness! A small daily dose of Andrews, the gentle laxative, helps the wonderful mechanism of your body to function easily and regularly.



**Take... ANDREWS**  
for INNER CLEANLINESS

## TABLETS OF COD LIVER OIL BUILD UP RESISTANCE

...and fortify the whole system against debility. They contain the concentrated nourishment and vitamins of pure cod liver oil, and provide vital energy, ensure natural growth, pep up appetite, and promote glowing health. In handy easy-to-take tablet form they're ideal for children as well as adults!

Woods

## TABLETS OF COD LIVER OIL

Packet 50 Sugar-Coated Tablets  
3/6 AT ALL CHEMISTS  
W.C. LEAH

## PAIN YOU CAN'T "EXPLAIN"



Blessed New Relief for Girls who Suffer Every Month

When pain, headache and muscular cramps are so bad that you can hardly drag your legs along... when all you want to do is sit down and cry... why don't you try a couple of Myzone tablets with water or a cup of tea. Thousands of active women—business girls, nurses, housewives—say Myzone relief is quicker, more lasting than anything else they've known. The secret is Myzone's amazing Actevin (anti-spasm) compound. Try Myzone with your next "pain." All chemists.

**\* MYZONE \***

DISTRIBUTED BY CLINTON WILLIAMS

# Worth Reporting

**T**HIS week we met 12 children aged from two to six who, in a large sunny garden, are learning how to jump, chase a dog, play ball, climb fences, swing on monkey bars, and run up and down steps.

They have to be taught how to do these things because they are blind.

At the special school they attend—the Victor Maxwell Home for Blind Children in the Sydney suburb of Woolahra—they also gain what will be most important to them in their future life in darkness, a sense of self-confidence.

To enable more children to go to this school the Sydney Blind Institute is asking for funds to enlarge the home.

On Sunday, June 29, radio station 2UW will make a day-long appeal for this cause, and donors' names will be announced over the air as they come in.

The director of the school, Miss Isle Karger, told us that parents protected their blind children too much.

"Often children of three come to us who are still at a baby standard," she said.

"They have to be taught everything. Many of them can't walk because they have been too frightened to take a step into the darkness ahead of them and so their parents have always carried them."

**A LOVELY Continental atmosphere was produced by the woman sitting next to us at a performance of "Tosca" in Sydney recently.**

At the end of the first act she applauded madly, calling out "Bis" and "Encore" with such abandon that we almost imagined ourselves at La Scala.

Then she turned to her companion and said: "Beautiful, wasn't it? What is the name of this opera?"

**SINCE** our only contact with crime is through the pages of an occasional Peter Cheyney or Agatha Christie thriller, we admit to some excitement when we sat next to a detective in the tram the other day.

Of course we didn't know he WAS a detective until we rudely read a neat, printed label on a large parcel he carried, which said, "Exhibits in charge of Detective X."

We gazed with fascination at the parcel... revolvers, blood-stained shirts, daggers... we could almost see them through the brown paper.

Then after reading the rest of the label, with offender's name, date of trial, court listed, we came to the heading, "Crime."

Breathing heavily we leant over the detective's shoulder to see: "Stealing onion plants."

## Women win seats on shire councils

**LIVE-WIRE** campaigning by two Queensland women has resulted in their election to their shire councils.

Mrs. Dorothy H. Wadley, a housewife and optometrist, has been elected to the Atherton Council and Mrs. Lasca Atkinson, a grazier's wife, of Malanda, is now on the Eacham Council.

After reading one of the bright pamphlets put out by Mrs. Wadley, we are not surprised at her election, either.

Listing the various local problems as headings, she made her approach this way:

Water... WHO appreciates more an adequate supply of clear water and would work harder to get it... Man or woman?

Footpaths... WHO more often wheels the pram along the residential streets and can more easily detect their faults... Man or woman?

The electors decided that the answer to all these questions and others was Woman.

## Mannequins parade in shop window

**WE** spent the most of a recent lunch-hour watching the smallest mannequin parade we have ever encountered.

"Smallest" refers to the space in which the mannequins paraded. It was in a five foot by three shop window in a Sydney street.

Three pretty Sydney girls, Fran Wilkenson, Marie Roberts, and Robin Farquharson, who did the modelling, wore a total of 60 frocks between noon and 2 p.m.

The mannequins told us that at first they felt a little like goldfish in a bowl, but found they worked most naturally by smiling at the most responsive face they could see in the audience.

"The men smile back," said Marie Roberts, "but women and girls mostly just look."

Most enthusiastic audience reaction while we were watching came from three-year-old Gregory Lock Lee, who was in town on a shopping expedition with his mother. He pressed his nose against the glass and beamed heartily at the girls.

"Pretty girls," he sang out to his mother. "Oh, look at the pretty girls."

## Young pioneers off to the islands

**STARTING** from scratch on a piece of uncleared land on the island of Malaita, in the Solomon Islands, a young married couple from Sydney, Lance and Joan Waddington, are going to build and run a leper colony.

These two young pioneers, who were married in February this year, are Seventh Day Adventist medical missionaries. This is their first assignment.

Among their equipment and supplies are £151 worth of groceries, which they hope will last them for 12 months.

Their "next-door neighbors" on Malaita will be Mr. and Mrs. Alan Tilley, who run a bush clinic there, and about 40,000 natives.

# The Neal family of 8 vote for RINSO

WITH ITS THICKER, RICHER SUDS



2 SETS OF TWINS 14 MONTHS APART MEANS 4 BABIES TO WASH FOR! ORDINARY SUDS JUST AREN'T IN THE RACE — I COULDN'T MANAGE WITHOUT RINSO!



I NEVER MIND LENDING A HAND WITH A RINSO WASH-UP! YOU CAN'T BEAT THESE THICK RINSO SUDS

WHEN PEOPLE TELL MUMMY HOW NICE WE ALL LOOK SHE ALWAYS SAYS "RINSO DOES IT!"

The Neals of 139 Hillcrest Avenue, East Bankstown, N.S.W., are typical of the thousands of Australian families who have proved that ordinary suds just can't compete with the magic of Rinso's thicker, richer suds. They know that Rinso is best for whites, coloureds and dishes.

NOW IN 2 SIZES

Standard and Big Economy Size



RINSO — A FINE LEVER PRODUCT

7.707 WWT22

## Oh! my sore throat!

Heat is Nature's method of relieving pain—and Wawn's Wonder Wool, a medicated cotton wool, is the proven method of creating "inner heat." A pad of Wawn's Wonder Wool provides welcome relief to winter colds, influenza, bronchitis and sore throats. It provides a full flow of energising blood to the affected area—relieves congestion—quickly, conveniently and without drugs. Keep a packet handy this winter!



**WAWN'S WONDER WOOL**  
for Chest Colds, Chills, Sclatice, Neuritis and Flie

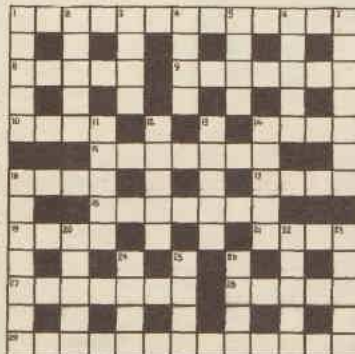
SW22

## THIS WEEK'S CROSSWORD

### ACROSS

- Corn-grinding buildings where delayed retribution is procured (3, 5, 2, 3).
- Pictitious press, hitherto unknown (5).
- Hasty run with inside camp (7).
- Kinet yet keep us in the centre (4).
- German song can be worrisome (4).
- Snake stop covers the road (7).
- Check turned kitchen implements (4).
- Relation kept in a run (4).

- Charm with no laibee where nothing is missing (7).
- Close, but it can be on the left when it is on the side (4).
- Length made out of an upturned brewer's cart (4).
- No thousand in tin is objectionable (7).
- Beer fit for a king when turned (5).
- Broken rue placed after the season before. Natively are surrounded by an unmarried woman lead to pieces of bad luck (13).



### DOWN

**WHITETHEPANT**  
A N O I S  
S U S I O U S  
I F O M O  
N I P U N D E R M A N D  
I S O F F  
S E R I O U S C O R A Y  
A O C B I  
N E P O N D A N T S O T  
O M R E P E  
N O S T R O M R O S E  
W A Y O P A L L E N E S H

- Dance of yellow-brown movement (3).
- Overhanging edge of roof with welcome in the middle (5).
- The French in an isolated land (4).
- Behold the saint who went astray (4).
- Precious stone which sighs for a friend (4).
- Black Edward stared (5).
- The German begins a river in Tasmania (7).
- Cock turned about and grow gradually less (5).
- Short galler begins a river flood (5).
- Blackguard begins a scheme (5).
- European country (5).
- Word which can be changed for another (7).
- A young woman out of order (3).
- Enrage a divine messenger if the end is displaced by fifty (5).
- Five hundred rats mixed in mistakes (3).
- Fashionable street in London is in slavery (4).
- Give up one hundred when five hundred follow in ease (4).
- Grout once usually for a penny (4).

Solution to last week's crossword.



**-and all of them good**

This explains why NYAL makes available to you a number of different cough formulations. Each one is designed for a particular purpose. When you are troubled with a cough—or when there are coughs in your household—why not ask your chemist to advise you on the particular NYAL preparation he feels will be most suitable.



CHILDREN, 5 YEARS TO 14 YEARS

NYAL CHILDREN'S COUGH MIXTURE is specially formulated for children between 5 and 14 years of age. This pleasant-tasting syrup contains only the purest ingredients which cut away phlegm and make breathing easier. Nyal Children's Cough Mixture helps to soothe the throat and chest and stop constant coughing. 2/9; 3/9



### BRONCHIAL COUGHS IN ADULTS

NYAL BRONCHITIS MIXTURE is a proven effective, dependable medicine which acts three ways in "breaking" stubborn coughs. The medication penetrates into congested bronchial tubes—cuts phlegm . . . soothes inflamed membranes of the throat and chest . . . brings soothing relief from irritating coughing. 3/9, 6/7.



## AFTER COUGHS AND 'FLU—A TONIC

After the weakening effects of coughs and flu you need a good tonic to rebuild strength and energy. NYL CREOPHOS is a reliable restorative tonic containing nine body building ingredients. Apart from its tonic properties, Nyl Creophos helps to clear up stubborn coughs that so often follow flu. Three sizes—1 1/2, 6 1/2, 7 1/4.



# NYAL

**FREE** NYAL FIRST AID GUIDE

No household is complete without a reliable First Aid Guide. If you would like your own copy of the 32-page Nyal First Aid Guide, attach this coupon to a sheet of paper bearing your name and address, and send it to the Nyal Company. A copy will be forwarded to you: by return mail, *Chapters on Parasos, Infectious Diseases in Children, and Hints on Health* should make this booklet of interest to everyone.

HYAL COMPANY, 431 GLEBE RD., GLEBE, SYDNEY, N.S.W.

THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY - June 25, 1952



In the home for a  
**LIFETIME**



"Carlton" Teapot—6 cup, in Swan-Cromalin or Polished Aluminium finish. Complete "Carlton" Teaset includes teapot, hot water jug, cream jug, sugar basin, and tray.

The beauty and quality of Swan brand products can be seen at a glance—but their faultless performance and long life have to be tested to be appreciated.

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ALUMINIUM HOLLOWARE  
ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES.

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BIRMINGHAM 10, ENGLAND.

M.W. 144



**KIWI**

THE WAX SHOE POLISH  
THAT GIVES  
A BRIGHTER SHINE  
FOR A LONGER TIME

Nine colours — Black • Dark Tan  
Mid Tan • Tan • Brown • Mahogany  
• On Blood • Blue • Neutral.  
All in the Open-in-a-Flash Tin



AUSTRALIA'S BIGGEST  
SELLING SHOE POLISH

**SUPERFLUOUS HAIR  
EASILY REMOVED  
AT HOME**



Handreds of women are overjoyed at the easy way the famous Swedish Wax Particles remove unwanted hair, without discomfort, leaving the skin clear, velvety, baby-smooth, and lovely. Success fully removes stubborn hairs in a few seconds. The hair comes right OUT—not merely off—from face, arms, legs and back of neck. Superior to all known methods, no stubby regrowth, no "shaved off" look. Pure, safe, natural ingredients—no smelly chemicals. Positively non-irritating. Sold in Money-back guarantee for only 15/- post free. Send coupon please wrap. Send Postal Note today to—

SOUTHERN GILBERT CO. PTY. LTD.  
EST. 1937  
Dept. A, De Mestre Place,  
Sydney, N.S.W.

## DRESS SENSE By Betty Keep

The three-quarter-length coat is a sound investment for any woman's wardrobe. This fashion advice answers the reader who writes for suggestions for a short coat.

"I AM going on a winter cruise, and the only new thing I am making is a short coat. Would you advise me about correct lengths and details and would it be possible to get a paper pattern?"

My suggestion is a three-quarter-length coat. After the cruise it can become a useful garment in your winter wardrobe. It would be wise to keep the coat classic in design and make it in a thick blanket wool. The design is illustrated at right. It will take 3½ yds. 54in. material. The panel on this page will show you how and where to order.

### Informal wear

"I AM going to stay in a country town with friends for several weeks. As it will be very cold, I wondered if you would suggest something unusual in slacks and a contrasting top. I am seventeen, blonde, and takes an SSW fitting."

My suggestion is to combine tartan plaid and velveteen. Plaid for slim-legged tailored slacks and green velveteen for a jacket. Have the jacket made with set-in sleeves and buttoned with silver buttons up to a high little Chinese collar. The sleeve cuffs and bottom of the jacket could be bound in a narrow matching braid.

### Coat dress

"MY wedding is at the end of July. What do you suggest I wear going away?"



**SMART COAT for winter is three-quarter length. Requires 3½ yds. 54in. material. Available in 32in. to 38in. bust. Price \$16.**

The wedding will be small, and I don't want anything extreme that can't be worn afterwards. I am 25 years old, with brown hair and eyes, and just an average figure."

For your going-away en-

### DRESS SENSE PATTERNS

WHEN ordering a paper pattern for the design illustrated, address your letter to Mrs. Betty Keep, "Dress Sense," The Australian Women's Weekly, Box 4088, G.P.O., Sydney.

Enclose the illustration of the design and 4/6, cost of pattern.

BE SURE TO GIVE FULL ADDRESS, INCLUDING THE STATE YOU LIVE IN, AND ALSO SUPPLY SIZE.

I will be glad to advise you in my column on any fashion problem.

semble, my suggestion is a coat that has a dress look. I suggest princess lines, the dress look further emphasised by Gibson-girl sleeves, a minimum waist, and a full skirt. When worn as a dress, the neckline is accented with a contrasting bow. Wheat-yellow is my suggestion for color, with black velvet for the bow. For other accessories, I like the idea of a matching color for the hat, and black for shoes, gloves, and handbag.

### White topper

"DO you think a white topper coat would look out of place to wear in cold weather? Would you give advice about a style for a tall figure?"

A white topper would be in fashion. White and off-whites have established themselves as year-round colors. A further point is their all-hour adaptability. They look well over pastel or dark colors. Have the lines of the jacket boxy in front, with the back flaring out. The shoulders should be soft, the fronts rounded up, and the back slightly dipped. Deep cuffs match collar and revers.

Ready to wear or cut out ready to make.

"SIDONIE."—Maternity nightgown with a front-button fastening and pretty lace trim. The material is rayon crepe-de-chine, obtainable in sky-blue, pale pink, and white.

Ready to Wear.—Sizes 32in. and 34in. bust, 65/11; 36in., 38in., and 40in. bust, 68/9. Postage and registration, 3/3 extra.

Cut Out Only.—Sizes 32in. and 34in. bust, 48/9; 36in., 38in., and 40in. bust, 52/3. Postage and registration, 3/3 extra.

★ ★

"DEBRA."—A smartly styled maternity dress obtainable in light-weight British melange. The color choice includes grey, blue, green, and brick-red.

Ready to Wear.—Sizes 32in. and 34in. bust, £6/8/9; 36in., 38in., and 40in. bust, £6/11/3.

Cut Out Only.—Sizes 32in. and 34in. bust, 95/11; 36in., 38in., and 40in. bust, 99/9. Postage and registration, 3/9 extra.

• NOTE: Please make a second color choice. No C.O.D. orders accepted. If ordering by mail, send to address given on page 38.

## Fashion FROCKS



Blow your nose

ON...

Don't put a cold in your pocket



## KLEENEX DISPOSABLE TISSUES

SOFT—STRONG—DOUBLY ABSORBENT

There's no more hygienic way to cope with a cold, hay fever, or common-or-garden sniffles than to use a soft, strong Kleenex tissue as a handkerchief. Germs are checked because you immediately dispose of Kleenex... tender noses are soothed by its dry softness and there's no unpleasant handkerchief washing. Time was when Kleenex could be bought only on a doctor's prescription, but now there is plenty to allow you to adopt Kleenex as a hygienic, personal habit.

Wherever you want cleanliness—  
use KLEENEX

Many uses for baby—Remove grime and make-up to keep skin clean and healthy—saves lost or grubby handkerchiefs for children and is a blessing to invalids.



IN THE BIG 14 OZ. TIN



**OLD DUTCH CLEANSER**

★ CLEANS FASTER!  
★ CLEANS EASIER!  
★ TESTS PROVE IT!

CHASES DIRT!

NOW SELLING EVERYWHERE  
**MODE-OLNE HAIR VITALIZER**

makes dry hair soft and lustrous, protects hair cells, restores the sheen. In handy tubes at chemists', hairdressers', stores.

FIRST OF EACH MONTH  
**A.M.**  
AUSTRALIA'S LEADING MAGAZINE  
FACT • FICTION • SPORT  
At all Newsagents and Bookstalls.



**LAUGHING**, she said, "Of course. We went larking." She could have been a kid of mine. She liked me. And she was on that filly. "How do you like my new filly?" she said.

"Well," I said, watching each word, "well, she is a handsome thing. Have you bought her?" I had to know. I had to. The filly shifted nervously, and the youngster talked to her, trying to quiet her.

"No," she said, and I could feel my breath come back. "No, we haven't yet. But my—my stepmother thinks she's lovely, showy, and she wants her for me." She leaned down just a little, and her smile was just for me. We were friends. "I don't really want her,"

## Night shopping booms in U.S.

**AMERICANS** can't see the sense of trying to sell when most of the buyers are working, so they open their shops at night again.

Most big New York retail stores are open at least one night a week, a third of the nation's supermarkets are open every night, and, in California, one shop never closes. It's as busy at 3 a.m. as at 3 p.m.

At first employees resisted the trend to night work, but now many, particularly salesmen working on commission, prefer it to day work.

Shopkeepers find that husband and wife, shopping together, reach decisions faster and that fewer goods are returned than when one buys something the other hasn't seen.

You can read more about this American shopping trend in A.M. for June, now on sale.

# The Faded Blue

Continued from page 10

she said confidentially. "I like Topper better. I know him. He—he's country-wise. He takes care of me." And that was it. That was the important thing.

"Yes," I said, "yes, that's what you want to look for. The right horse for you, one that you can count on, that won't let you down." I was trying to tell her, and I didn't know whether she understood or not. I'd have to make her understand. "When are you going to decide?" She shrugged a little.

"When they see how she does in the show, I guess," she said. Then her face was interested once again. "Shall we go larking again, next week maybe, you and I and Topper?"

"I hope we can," I said. The filly moved away impatiently, and I went on up and tried to eat something. But I couldn't.

I saw now how I'd feel if this kid were mine, if she belonged to me really, were a part of me, and if she were up on this jittery, flighty filly with no brains, and the things that might happen to them.

And I thought: You've done some of that. You've helped sell horses that were wrong for the people who bought them and you didn't think you were hurting anybody. Well, take a look now and see who you might be hurting. And they called me back into the ring to start the show again.

It came fourth in the afternoon, the lightweight hunter class, the one the filly would show in, and I saw something before that class came in. I saw Helen's face down there at the ringside, in the far curve, I looked at her, but I couldn't go over. I was on my own now, very much on my own. They brought the lightweights in.

There were nine horses in that class. Four were nothing. They refused at fences, ran out, were pullers—they made it easy for me. But four others, scattered in between, went round the way they should—a good pace, sure, steady, watching their jumps, standing off enough.

They were real hunters that you could trust. Not the most perfect ones for looks, for showy conformation; but they were field hunters who knew their way around and would keep you up there. Then Mickey Tor brought in the filly, all shined and braided.

He was a smart guy, Mickey. He'd kept the filly out of sight until it was her turn—away from the other horses, from the jumps, so that she wouldn't lose her head before she had to go, wouldn't get worked up and excited.

Then he brought her down and went to work, and I watched as I had never watched a horse. I was going to be fair to him, but I was going to be fairer to that snub-nosed kid. I saw what I knew I'd see.

Mickey had her ears up now, when she started around, but when she came into a jump those ears would go back, flicking, and I knew that Mickey had his far heel into her, the heel that I couldn't see, urging her on, forcing her.

I could see him bring her back when she tried to pull, to get away, his wrists scarcely moving, so that few would know the hold he had on her, and her pace went barely choppy once or twice, as if she didn't have any eagerness for what she was doing. I saw all that, but the crowd, most of them, didn't see it. They thought she was wonderful. They gave her a big hand.

And Mickey looked at me, and I lined them up.

She had it over the four others in looks, in conformation, and that counted. But not enough—with me. This time I was really judging. I marked my card and turned it in. The ringmaster brought out the ribbons, and Mickey Tor kept watching me.

There were four ribbons in that class, and I gave them to the four sure, steady hunters. I didn't give the filly a thing. I could hear the crowd gasp. A murmur of amazement ran through it, and Mickey Tor's face went tight. He rode on out. There was one more class and I judged it, but I was looking for two other things.

I was looking for Helen's face, and I found it. But she was too far away and I couldn't tell whether she knew. How could she, really? And I was looking for the group that would be around the chestnut filly. I found them, too. I had to talk to them. And, when that last class was finally over, I went out to them.

There were three of them in the group. There was that youngster, my pal. There was a tall, gaunt, lean man who looked as if he might have ridden once, and who had a twisted, friendly smile, not too happy. And there was Mickey Tor, still on the filly, trying not to let the anger show in his face. I was going up to them when the tall, lean man saw me, and made it easy for me.

"Mr. Carey," he said, "I wonder if you'd give us a minute." I moved in. There was a ring of people around. "I wonder," the tall man said, "if you would mind telling us just why you put this filly down,

## Beauty in brief:

# FINGERNAIL MAINTENANCE

By CAROLYN EARLE

● Cold weather increases nail breakage. When a nail snaps down near the quick, there is not much you can do but wait for it to grow, and perhaps camouflage the break with a false nail.

**SLIGHT** breaks can be mended with adhesive tape cut in a minute patch and tinted with nail polish, or with a small paper patch under polish.

For nail maintenance the rule is once over lightly each day with an emery board and plenty of good lubricating cream or oil around the fingernails each night.

You may lessen the hazard of nail breakage by keeping free edges filed smooth and by not aiming at nail lengths that are hard to maintain. When a nail snaps it is important to repair it right away.

A protective coat of varnish, which may be colored or not as you prefer, makes nails a little less vulnerable to injury.

A long-term remedy for brittle nails is to paint them nightly with a coat of white iodine. This is effective if you persevere.

why she didn't place or perhaps win her class?"

He wasn't mad at me; he just wanted to know. So I told him. And I had the chance to tell Mickey Tor something, too, indirectly.

"The filly," I said, "is a lovely thing. But she's not ready yet. She has to be ridden every minute—she has to be watched. She isn't a seasoned, steady hunter. She's unpredictable." I looked at Mickey.

"I think," I said, "that Mr. Tor put the filly into this show to find out just that—before he sold her. Mr. Tor likes to be sure that a horse is right before he sells it. Don't you, Mickey?"

Mickey Tor looked at me for seconds, and then he grinned. Just a little. "I certainly do," he said, and I went on away. I looked for

Helen. I thought she might be there in the crowd, maybe looking for me. But she wasn't.

So I went on back to my car. And Helen was sitting in the front seat, waiting for me. The way she always had.

"Hi," I said, and my voice sounded queer. I opened the door, and she moved over. And then she smiled at me, and held out something. It was a blue ribbon. She just held it there and smiled, and her smile had everything that I had ever hoped for, ever dreamed of.

"This one," she said, "was left over. And—and it isn't faded. It's very, very bright. It's for you. From me." I took it and started the car, and we drove a long, long way before we said anything more, either of us.

(Copyright)

You'll love the smooth good looks of

# HILTON

*Waltz Dream*  
NYLONS  
with Nyloseal

*Nyloseal*—adds to Nylons... a lovely misty dullness  
... makes your legs look smooth, slim and lovely,  
*Nyloseal*—adds to Nylons... extra elasticity...  
gives you extra comfort.  
*Nyloseal*—adds to Nylons... much greater snag  
protection... with *Nyloseal* you have less  
snags than ever before.

And remember ONLY **HILTON** Nylons have this wonderful *Nyloseal*.



Remember **HILTON** Socks for Juniors are the same high standard of quality as the famous **HILTON** Stockings.

\**Nyloseal* makes **HILTON** the nylons with a difference!



## IT'S A LAUGHING MATTER AMONG MOVIE COMICS



**DONALD O'CONNOR**, clever 27-year-old entertainer who is known as the youngest old-timer in American show business, takes a modern, prattling comedy stance in his film comedy. First-hand accounts of his work with Gene Kelly and Debbie Reynolds in "Singin' In the Rain" (M.G.M.) are enthusiastic.



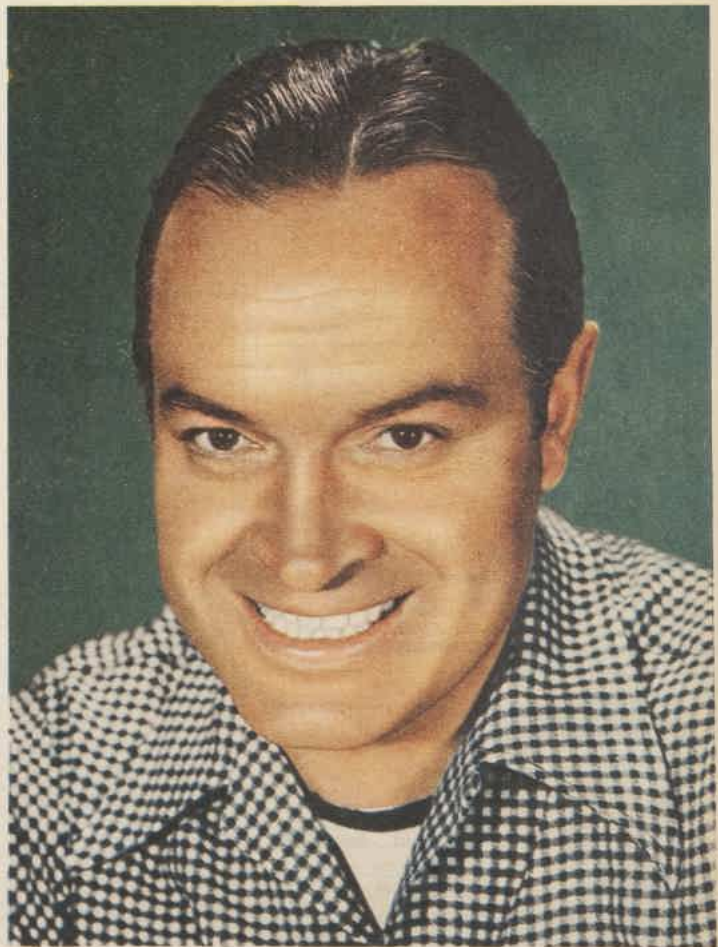
**DEAN MARTIN** and **JERRY LEWIS** (above) almost scuttle the U.S. Navy in Paramount's "Sailor Beware." The story gives Jerry a chance to indulge his knuckle-duster humor, while Dean carries the vocals.

(3)

**RED SKELTON** (left), M.G.M.'s cavorting funnyman, combines a sheepish grin and a grimacing comedy style to win laughs. His next picture is "Lovely To Look At," which is a remake of the musical "Roberta."

(3)

**BOB HOPE** (right), Paramount's comedy star, chooses to play the nervous clown. Bob is a ludicrous Harvard undergraduate out West in search of his fortune in "Son of Paleface," with Jane Russell as a wicked adventuress.





# When winter strikes

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## Talking of Films

By M. J. McMAHON

★★ *The Story of Tosca*  
WITHIN the limitations set by English sub-titling and flamboyant Continental acting by some of the cast, Scarpia's "The Story of Tosca" is an interesting example of Italian melodrama.

Victorian Sardou wrote this famous tragedy of two unfortunate lovers, and Puccini used it as the theme for his opera "La Tosca"; some well-known excerpts from the opera are interpolated with the film action.

The singing voices are those of operatic stars Ferruccio Tagliavini and Mafalda Ravero.

The grim little story is set in Italy during the time when Napoleon was a power in Europe; Italy is divided into numerous states, and Rome is split by political unrest.

The two lovers are Flavia Tosca (Imperio Argentina) and her rebel lover, Mario (Rossano Brazzi).

Cameras capture the sombre

beauty of Italian architecture as unscrupulous secret police chief Baron Scarpia hounds the lovers to their inevitable doom. As Scarpia, Michel Simon gives the film's top performance.

In Sydney—Variety.

★ *The Golden Horde*

LAVISHLY decorated and filmed in picturesque technicolor, Universal's "The Golden Horde" is a typical Hollywood fancy-dress parade. It is set in the 13th century but remains persistently of the 20th century.

The screenplay relates how boorish Sir Guy (David Farrar) and a tiny band of English Crusaders saved Samarkand from capture and destruction by brutal invader Genghis Khan.

Ann Blyth as Princess Shalimar of Samarkand is a snippy little miss who faces each threat—and there are a lot—in still another exotic costume.

In Sydney—Lyceum.

## CITY FILM GUIDE

### Films reviewed

CAPITOL.—"Metropolis," thriller, starring Alfred Abel, Brigitte Helm. Plus "Ghosts on the Loose," thriller, starring Bela Lugosi, Ava Gardner. (Both re-releases.)

CENTURY.—★ "I Want You," romantic drama, starring Dana Andrews, Dorothy Maguire, Farley Granger, Peggy Dow. Plus featurettes.

CIVIC.—★ "Lared," mystery, starring Lucille Ball, George Sanders. Plus ★ "Pitfall," drama, starring Elizabeth Scott, Dick Powell. (Both re-releases.)

EMBASSY.—★ "The Browning Version," drama, starring Michael Redgrave, Jean Kent, Nigel Patrick. Plus featurettes.

ESQUIRE.—★ "The River," technicolor drama of India, starring Esmond Knight, Arthur Shields, Patricia Walters. Plus featurettes.

LIBERTY.—★ "Invitation," romantic drama, starring Dorothy Maguire, Van Johnson. Plus ★ "Love Is Better Than Ever," romantic comedy, starring Elizabeth Taylor, Larry Parks.

LYCEUM.—★ "The Golden Horde," technicolor historical drama, starring Ann Blyth, David Farrar. (See review this page.) Plus "You Never Can Tell," romantic comedy, starring Dick Powell, Peggy Dow.

LYRIC.—★ "The Set-Up," boxing drama, starring Robert Ryan, Audrey Totter. Plus "King of the Ring," highlights from the career of Joe Louis. (Both re-releases.)

PALACE.—★ "Inside the Walls of Folsom Prison," prison drama, starring David Brian, Steve Cochran, Ted de Corsia. Plus ★ "Arthur Takes Over." (Re-release.)

PARK.—★ "Storm Warning," social drama, starring Ginger Rogers, Ronald Reagan. Plus "Rio Grande Patrol," a Tim Holt Western.

PRINCE EDWARD.—★ "A Place in the Sun," drama, starring Montgomery Clift, Shelley Winters, Elizabeth Taylor. Plus featurettes.

SAVOY.—★ "La Ronde," sophisticated French comedy, starring Danielle Darrieux, Anton Walbrook. Plus featurettes.

ST. JAMES.—★ "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," thriller, starring Spencer Tracy, Ingrid Bergman, Lana Turner. (Re-release.) Plus featurettes.

VARIETY.—★ "The Story of Tosca," musical drama based on Sardou's play, starring Michel Simon, Argentina. (See review this page.) Plus "Flying With Music."

### Films not yet reviewed

MAYFAIR.—"Kangaroo," technicolor drama of early Australia, starring Peter Lawford, Maureen O'Hara, Richard Boone. Plus "The Lady Says No," comedy, starring Joan Caulfield, David Niven.

PLAZA.—"Anne of the Indies," pirate adventure in technicolor, starring Jean Peters, Louis Jourdan, Debra Paget. Plus "Woman in the Dark," crime drama, starring Penny Edwards, Ross Elliott.

REGENT.—"Kangaroo," technicolor drama of early Australia, starring Peter Lawford, Maureen O'Hara, Richard Boone. Plus "The Lady Says No," comedy, starring Joan Caulfield, David Niven.

STATE.—"Thunder on the Hill," drama, starring Claudette Colbert, Ann Blyth, Robert Douglas, Michael Pate. Plus "Bedtime for Bonzo," romantic comedy, starring Ronald Reagan, Diana Lynn.

VICTORY.—"The Mob," suspense drama, starring Broderick Crawford, Betty Buhler. Plus "Harem Girl," romantic comedy, starring Joan Davis, Arthur Blake.

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A2-2

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POWDERS



TABLETS

ANACIN

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**1 ORDERS** are given to resident Provost (Barry Jones), left, by German commander of the garrison on Armorel concerning the disposition of island inhabitants. Venus, a valuable cow, is confiscated.

**2 CONCERN** is expressed by Whitehall officials about the future of British inhabitants of the island, including Venus. The War Office is approached, and plans to rescue the cow are made.

## APPOINTMENT WITH VENUS



VENUS is the bovine star of Betty Box's light wartime comedy "Appointment With Venus."

The discovery that Venus, a prize pedigree cow, is on Armorel, a small Channel Island temporarily occupied by enemy forces, causes a mild upheaval at the British Ministry of Agriculture.

The Ministry approaches the War Office, Naval Intelligence and Combined Ops, get to work and plan a raid on the island; Venus, who is in calf to Mars of Mellowbury III, a champion sire which suddenly left Armorel when he stepped on a land mine, is finally repatriated for the ultimate benefit of British livestock.



**4 BOARDING** a submarine, they are taken to the island and land on a raft. Morland and Nicola are accompanied by a wireless operator.

**3 TEAM** of rescuers assembles for the job, including Major Valentine Morland (David Niven) and an A.T.S. cook, Nicola Fallaise (Glynis Johns).



**5 HIDING** in the loft of Venus' cowshed on the island, Morland and Nicola overhear German Captain Weiss giving orders for Venus to be shipped to Germany for stud purposes.

**6 PLANS** are made, with the help of the Provost, to frustrate the enemy attempt to remove the cow. Although the party is in danger of discovery, the Provost assures them that the islanders are loyal to Britain.



**7 ARTIST** Lionel Fallaise (Kenneth More), right, camouflages a substitute cow to hoodwink the enemy. But German Sgt. Vogel discovers hiding place, and Venus chooses that moment to have her calf.

**8 PROCESSION** makes its way to the waiting craft, as, after overpowering Vogel and making him their prisoner, the raiders are free. Mission accomplished, Venus and party depart.



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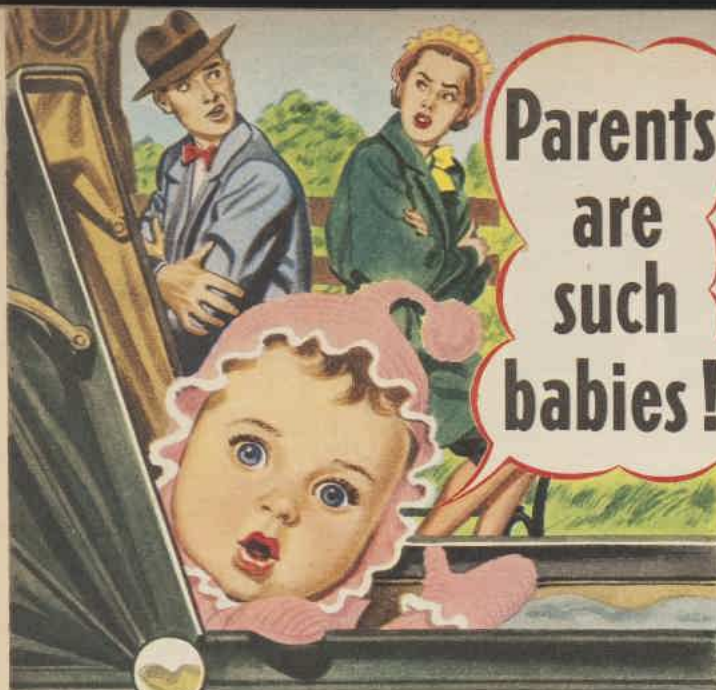
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Page 30

AUNT FLORENCE murmured, "Good gracious! What a ghouliah creature you are. Did you like Hamlet?" "Yes, I did, but I don't know whether he likes me. Bertha says he takes time to get used to strangers. I was thinking—I wondered—" for the first time Jennie's composed voice quivered, her face showed emotion. "Yes, child?" said Aunt Florence.

"—if I could see him sometimes. Then he'd get to like me, maybe."

"And what's to stop you?" said Aunt Florence kindly. "I'll have Hamlet set aside an hour any afternoon Sarah can spare you. It'll do him good, having company. Is that all right with you, Sarah?"

"I should think it's perfectly all right, Aunt Florence." She could read the expression in Aunt Florence's eyes perfectly. The poor, lonely child looking for someone to love her, even an animal.

"Now we'd better go," she said briskly. "Do you want to say good-bye to Hamlet?"

"I've said it," Jennie answered. For the first time and quite spontaneously she put her hand in Sarah's.

Jennie had insisted on taking Baby Robert with his gangling legs walking with them. She carried him importantly in both arms, but she remained sufficiently childlike to scuff leaves and even to chatter a little.

Sarah chattered back lightly. After all, it was much too early to make a lot of headway with a child like Jennie.

She half expected to find Oliver at the cafe, but instead there were Tim and old Mrs. Foster.

"Well, well," said Tim. "This is a popular spot to-day. Are you two having tea?"

"Yes," said Sarah shortly. "Then come to our table. I saw you coming and waited."

"I was too famished to wait," called old Mrs. Foster. "These buns are very good. I often come over here and try them."

Tim brushed his finger lightly over Sarah's forehead. "Don't scowl," he whispered. He turned to Jennie. "Which do you like best, cakes or buns?"

"Cakes, thank you," Jennie said.

"Then take two of these and go out in the sun. It's much better for the baby."

Jennie smiled up at him, her face all at once tender.

"It is, too. He doesn't get enough sun. I'll be out here, Miss Stacey."

As she went, Sarah said, "You shouldn't encourage her to think that horrible bit of wood is alive. She's daft enough about it already."

Tim smiled pleasantly. "Everyone has to have his method of escape. Jennie has her family, I have penguins. As it happens, our conversation isn't going to be for Jennie's ears."

"No, it isn't," Mrs. Foster agreed, brushing crumbs off her lap. "Tim's just been asking me who Lexie Adams was."

"Was?" Sarah said.

"Well, she's been missing for long enough."

"Missing?" Involuntarily Sarah looked at Tim and saw that he was watching Mrs. Foster intently. His face looked sharpened, as if the skin had tightened over it.

She wondered what concerned him so much now about Lexie Adams when last night he had been completely indifferent. Or had he?

"Yes," said Mrs. Foster, cutting her cake into precise little squares. "Goodness knows what's happened to her. The story is she went away with a man, but I'm guessing he strangled her or tipped her over a cliff."

"That would be rather untidy," Tim murmured. "Who was the man she went away with?"

"They never found out. Such a to-do, there was. Didn't you see it in the paper, Sarah? They gave her a paragraph because she was just coming into prominence on the stage."

"No, I didn't see it," Sarah said.

"Well, there it was," Mrs. Foster went on. "The girl vanished, and the only evidence was that of the porter of the flats where she lived. He said he'd seen her go out with a man. He'd seen this particular man with her on several occasions. But none of her friends knew anything about him."

"She must have been living a double life," she went on. "Not that she explained anything even then. She just wrote a note to her manager saying she'd decided to take a long holiday and was breaking her contract. Just like that. I thought it looked decidedly fishy, but Oliver said something about the course of true love."

"We haven't ordered your tea," said Tim to Sarah. He beckoned to the waitress.

Sarah leaned across the table. "I don't follow all this, Mrs. Foster. Lexie was Rachel Massey's friend, and Rachel, I gather, was in the States when she disappeared, or chose love and obscurity, or whatever it was. But what has it to do with the Fosters?"

voice of a Dove

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"I think it's some sort of musical instrument. I saw one in a hillbilly band once."

Mrs. Foster's eyes glistened.

"The reason for that is a little surprising. Tim, I hope you won't mind this, but it's life, the kind you won't find down with your penguins. Lexie Adams was Eliot's friend—" she winked with rich appreciation. "That kind of friend, I should think."

"Eliot's!" Sarah exclaimed.

"Yes. That surprises you, doesn't it? You'd think it would be Oliver, wouldn't you? He's the one the ladies notice. But no, it was Eliot who found her. Apparently they began with music in common. Eliot used to visit her a lot. That was before Oliver had married and we were all in the house in Pinchio."

She gave a sigh. "It wasn't nearly such a nice house as Oliver has now, dark and rather damp, and in a poor neighborhood. But it was the best we could do then—my husband died when the boys were young and we'd had a struggle."

"And this was while Mary was alive?" Tim said. His voice again had that disconcerting grimace that made him two separate people.

"Yes, of course. I said we were in the Pinchio house, and it was the Kensington house she died in. She knew nothing of it, poor child, until afterwards, when rumors about Lexie's private life were made public. But it wasn't Eliot Lexie went off with. The porter swore to that. He was most explicit."

Continued from page 4

She helped herself to another square of cake. "He could have been lying, of course. Some people were suspicious. Her family even called the police in. But they never traced her. And, of course, Eliot had nothing to do with it. My younger son may be a failure, but he's no bigamist."

Sarah couldn't help wondering how Mrs. Foster would have behaved had she really believed her son had abducted a woman. She almost thought the old woman would enjoy it as a sensation.

Sarah, deep in her shocked thoughts, was aware of Tim indicating her unstaked cup of tea. She looked up to see his narrow, mocking eyes.

"Don't let a small thing like a murder put you off your tea," he was saying.

"Tim, don't be idiotic. She wasn't murdered. She merely disappeared. Hundreds of people disappear, a lot of them purposely."

"Yes," said old Mrs. Foster in her rich, relishing voice. "Lexie's disappearance was made to look like being on purpose with that letter and all. But, if you ask me, she was murdered. Those kind always are."

Sarah pushed back her chair, feeling distasteful to the story as for Mrs. Foster's relish in it. As she moved, Jennie came in from outside.

"It's starting to rain, Miss Stacey. Shouldn't we go home?"

Sarah gladly seized the chance to go. "Yes, we must. We'll run. Good-bye, Mrs. Foster. Good-bye, Tim."

Tim grinned and said imperiously, "I'll come with you. Jennie can get under my coat."

Mrs. Foster settled herself comfortably in her chair.

"I shall stay here until the shower is over. I'll see you both at dinner."

Before they were half-way across the park the rain had stopped, and Jennie slipped out of the shelter of Tim's coat and ran on ahead. Then Tim tucked his arm in Sarah's in a completely possessive way.

"There's no need to hold my arm," she said stiffly. "It's not dark. I don't have to be supported, and we're not sweethearts."

"Let's come out," he said gaily, "when all three things are true."

Sarah thought of the charming house in Kensington Walk, of the bowls of flowers in the hall and lounge, of the firelight on the walls, and the air of graciousness and ease.

She thought of Venetia, with her large blue eyes and uncertain air and beautiful clothes. And Oliver, good-natured, amusing, and tolerant, with his voice that could be as fascinatingly soft as the crooning of doves. And of the sound of Eliot's music.

None of that could be connected with an actress mysteriously disappearing or with a pregnant woman accidentally falling down a steep flight of stairs. It was out of character. It didn't belong in that house.

"Tim," she said abruptly, speaking for the first time, "I'm so sorry you had to find out that way."

He looked down at her—she hadn't realised the satisfaction of walking with a man tall enough to look down at her.

"Find out what way?" he asked. His voice was mild.

"About Eliot, of course. Poor Mary, it must have been a dreadful shock to her. With the baby coming, too. I mean, that's a time when a wife would expect her husband to be quite faithful. She must have been very sensitive. And she must have loved him very much."

Please turn to page 34

THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY - JUNE 25, 1952





**SPECTATORS.** Mrs. Bob Mackay, Dungog (left), Mrs. John Archibald, Scone, Mrs. Frank Bragg, wife of the president of Hunter Valley Polo Association, Mrs. Bill Bishop, Scone, and Miss Dorothy Martin, Dungog, at the Countess of Dudley Cup polo tournament at Maitland.

# Dudley Cup CARNIVAL AT MAITLAND

**T**HERE was much rejoicing when Wirragulla team with its glamor boys, Mick Hooke, Ken and Bob Mackay, and Laurie Morgan, made Australian polo history by winning the Countess of Dudley Cup for the fourth successive year.

It's the first time a team has won the Cup four years running.

The victory topped four days of polo at Maitland Polo Ground between teams from Scone, Narramine, Coolah, Wellington, Mudgee, Quirindi, Goondiwindi, and Wirragulla (Dungog).

Excited team supporters crowded back-stage of Maitland Town Hall to offer congratulations after Mrs. Tom Bray, wife of a vice-president of N.S.W. Polo Association, presented the Cup to the captain, Mick Hooke, who promptly filled it with champagne.

The party followed the final matches played on a precarious, slippery ground in the worst weather on record. This didn't deter the winners, however, who were oblivious to rain dripping into their cups of cheer as they stood in the mud to celebrate. After three days of perfect weather, old hands simply nodded knowingly when the rain began, and said: "It's about time the polo weather arrived."

**AT THE BALL.** Elizabeth Latham, "Ellerston," Scone, with John Rourke, Maitland, who gave a pre-ball party at his home.

**A WELCOME** party at the Town Hall on the first night broke the ice between visiting teams. The invitation said, "Come straight from the grounds as you are," and guests followed it to the letter—women in tweed suits and snow boots, and men in riding clothes.

**THE** second night was declared a free evening, so most of the young people took themselves off to Michael Meredith's buffet dinner-party at the home of his parents, Dr. and Mrs. John Meredith, at Weston, ten miles from Maitland.

**INFORMAL** parties in hotels and private homes preceded the Cup Ball at the Town Hall. Memories of past Dudley Cup glories were revived at a party given by a vice-president of the Polo Association, Jack Enright, and his wife. In the old days, their home, "Sarsfield," rang with merriment at pre-ball parties for as many as 400 guests.

**WINNING CAPTAIN.** Mick Hooke, captain of the victorious Wirragulla team, which won the Dudley Cup for the fourth time, mounts a life-sized polo pony which was used to decorate the Maitland Town Hall for the Ball. Mrs. Hooke (left) and Mrs. Ken Mackay look on.

**AFTER** watching for four days from the sidelines, I'm convinced that polo wives and mothers work as hard as the players. The job of seeing there are clean white breeches ready each morning and preparing giant supplies of tea and sandwiches for picnic lunches is more strenuous than a chukka.

Once the game commences, they sit with their hearts in their mouths in case one of the players is hurt. At the end of each chukka they are ready with a lightning change of polo sticks, resin for hands, orange quarters or a lighted cigarette. Yet all agree they wouldn't miss a tournament for the world. Ninety-year-old Mrs. Ellen Mackay summed it up when she told me: "I'm too nervous really to enjoy the match, but I like seeing all the people."

**MUSTARD-KEEN** were the Wellington team and their supporters. Wellington cars were decorated with the team's maroon colors, and the wives pinned maroon ribbons to their lapels. When a float of their polo ponies went past during a match, Wellington captain Lester Smith swore their eyes were all on the ball, and that they were probably saying to each other: "That was a silly move for that horse to make. I wouldn't have done that!"—which bears out Bob Ashton's theory that polo is 50 per cent rider's skill and the rest horse's intuition!

**NOTICED** attractive Pam Woods, of Merriwa, looking over the Quirindi ponies with an appraising eye and learned she was groom for the Guy Haydens' ponies, Canasta, Eulalie, Joe, and Norm, which their son, John, rides in the Quirindi team. Pam, who was a physiotherapist in Sydney until this year, is working for the Guy Haydens at "Warrah Ridge," and accompanied them to the Cup.

**POLO** fashions . . . the "boots" worn by Ken Mackay's ponies which were the envy of all players, and, I'd say, their ponies. Designed by Ken, they protect the horse's leg from knee to hoof . . . the wonderful ten-gallon hats which the Goondiwindi team wore. Captain Wally Gunn said it wasn't because they lived near Texas, Queensland, either!

**ON** Sunday morning farewells echoed around the town as cars and pony floats were loaded up for the long trek home. Most of the teams will meet again when Narramine, Wellington, and Mudgee all have their meetings within the next six weeks.

Anne



**TINY TOTS** Elizabeth Graham (left), daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Dick Graham, "Bellevue," Maitland, and Ruth and Andrew Gibson, who accompanied their parents, Dr. and Mrs. Dick Gibson, of Newcastle, to the matches.



**HIGHLAND FLING** is danced by Sandra Bragg and Bruce Copp to bagpipes played by Col. Jack Churchill, of Seaforth Highlanders, Williamtown, at the ball.



**QUIRINDI PLAYER** Pete Cadmore, Judith Coy, Goondiwindi, and Nerida Hill, Quirindi. Pete's team won the Sir J. J. Garvan Cup from Narramine by 7½ goals to 6.



# Pary Hordern's Paris Notes

EIGHT of the season's most  
winter collections in New  
trend is towards both slim and  
hip-length with an ample arm  
models all illustrate the important  
Collars are often worn up to



● Dior's charcoal-grey woollen one-piece, above, has a front-buttoned fastening cleverly disappearing into two hip pleats. The skirt is narrow and waist slim.



● Castillo of Lanvin scored an enormous success with the black-and-white diagonal-stripe tweed suit, right. The fitted jacket is finished with a large black velvet bow.



● Paquin designed the charming suit, above right, in speckled beige tweed. The jacket has unusual heart-shaped welt pocket, which is very flattering to the waist. The skirt is gored, slightly "belled."



● Patou's classic suit, above right, made in one of the smartest colors of the season, electric-blue. The face-framing cape collar is in black velvet.



# on the Season's Successes.

successful models, chosen from New York, London and Paris. The hemlines. Jackets are mainly and soft shoulder-line. The of collars and neckline accents. and flatter head and face.



● Fath uses beaver for collar and cuffs on his double-breasted olive-green suit, above. Note smart little shuttle-shaped hat worn well forward.

● Schiaparelli's wonderful violet-blue coat, above, is reversible and designed to be worn with the new full skirtline. The designer's suggestion is tan or black for accessories.

● Balenciaga's superb new line of fitted front and loosely hanging back is seen above. The collar is worn turned up. The skirt is pencil-slim.

● Dior shows simplicity of line in his double-breasted charcoal-grey suit, above right. The skirt is made in shaped gores, which fall in lovely unpressed pleats.

*Dorothea Johnston*



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TIM said, "So what?" There was a new note in his voice that Sarah didn't choose to hear.

"Well, you did wonder how her fall could have been an accident. Obviously it wasn't."

She was startled to feel Tim gripping her arm. His face was taut, his eyes narrowed and fierce. He was all at once the other person, the one she didn't know at all and of whom she was a little afraid.

"Never let me hear you say that again," he told her. "Mary didn't kill herself. She was my sister. I knew her as well as one person can know another. She wasn't the kind to go out of this world leaving one child and taking another with her. She was quiet and sweet and soft, but she had courage. Do you understand?"

Sarah dragged her arm from his grip. Her own temper was rising. She hadn't meant to insult his sister, and he knew she hadn't.

"I'm sorry if I've jumped to conclusions," she said stiffly. "It seemed obvious to me. Then what do you think? That someone pushed her?"

"Perhaps," he said softly between hard lips. "Perhaps."

It all, Sarah thought afterwards, seemed to be a tissue of suppositions—Mrs. Hopkins' unfounded and baseless predictions, Eliot's apparent fear of what Rachel Massey might discover, Tim's startling suspicions about Mary's death.

She, personally, would refuse to read anything significant into any of the events.

When they got in, Petunia told Sarah that Mrs. Oliver went straight up to Venetia's room.

There she found Venetia sitting on the stool in front of the mirror, dressed in her new negligee and brushing her hair.

"Oh, Sarah," she said, "are you good at new styles of hair dressing? I should go into town and get mine done, but I don't feel equal to it since we're going out to-night. Did you hear about it, by the way?"

## Voice of a Dove

Continued from page 30

Oliver's taking us all to the theatre, then we're having a late dinner-party here afterwards."

She added, pleasantly enough, "You're to come, of course. And I believe he's asked your aunt, too. He says we should get acquainted, being next-door neighbors."

"How kind of him!" Sarah exclaimed.

"Oh, Oliver's always kind," Venetia said casually. "Being married to a writer isn't all fun, but it has its compensations. Look what he's just given me."

In her palm sparkled a pair of diamond ear-rings.

"How perfectly lovely," Sarah said. "How lucky you are."

Venetia put them back in their box. "I have a weakness for pretty things. Oliver knows and he spoils me. I expect it's very bad for me."

SARAH said diffidently, "I'm not expert."

"That doesn't matter, so long as it shows my ear-rings to the best advantage. Oliver will be disappointed if I don't show them off."

Sarah picked up the hair-brush and began to brush Venetia's hair rather violently. The world was divided into two classes, the women who were given things and the ones who had to buy them for themselves. She belonged to the latter, and she liked it. She didn't have to say thank you to anyone.

"Is Eliot coming to-night?" she asked.

"Oh, yes, Oliver insists. He says Eliot's getting morbid. Poor boy, I'm awfully fond of him. I do what I can, but one gets a little impatient with him all the same. It's not fair to other people going round with a long face all the time."

Sarah brushed on vigorously. "Now he and Oliver are having a row because Oliver's invited Rachel Massey to come with us," Venetia went on. "She

arrived in London to-day. She and Burgess are coming here for drinks before we leave, then for dinner afterwards. I really can't think why Eliot is taking this attitude. He's growing into a recluse."

Sarah looped up the long, shining strands of Venetia's hair into ringlets. She had come here to be Jennie's governess, not Venetia's maid. No, that wasn't true. She had come because her long nose scented a drama, and she had never been able to keep it out of trouble.

"Who else is coming to-night?" she asked.

"Oh, Oliver's mother. Isn't she a frightful old woman? But one has to put up with her, of course. Burgess Reid, we owe him a party, and he can partner Rachel. Tim, of course. How do you like Tim, Sarah?"

"He's—oh, I suppose—"

Venetia gave her light, pretty laugh. "Say no more. He is quite odd, isn't he? But being Mary's brother we have to be nice to him. Never mind, he'll be off to the South Pole again before long. And you can bear him to-night, can't you?"

"Of course," Sarah said politely.

"Then there's your aunt. I'm longing to meet her. Oliver says she's quite adorable. Sarah, that style looks wonderful. How clever you are. Oliver will rave over it."

Sarah was aware that Venetia was perfectly well able to do her own hair, but she had wanted to show off the earrings. Now that was done, Sarah could go. She went out, planning to hurry up to Jennie. But again she was detained, this time by the telephone ringing and Petunia calling to her that she was wanted.

It was Aunt Florence. "Sarah, imagine me being included in your party to-night. That was Oliver. Isn't he a charming man? He just walked in as if he'd known me all his life. And he spoke most highly of you."

"Did he?" Sarah murmured, pleased.

"What are you going to wear, dear?" came Aunt Florence's voice.

"Oh, my grey. It's all I have, Aunt Florence."

"It's very becoming, dear, but you ought to get some more dresses. You ought to become more clothes-conscious now. I shall wear my black velvet and my diamonds."

More diamonds! Sarah said helplessly. "But, Aunt Florence, it's a very small party."

"Definitely my diamonds," came Aunt Florence's stubborn voice.

When Sarah, dressed for the theatre, went downstairs she found, to her surprise, that Eliot was playing the piano in the drawing-room. Venetia was listening to him. There was no one else in the room.

When he stopped, Venetia said warmly, "That was beautiful, Eliot."

The warmth in her voice brought surprisingly an answering warmth to Eliot's face. "I'm glad you liked it."

"But I always like your playing. I wish you would do it down here more often instead of shutting yourself upstairs. No one uses this piano except Oliver, and he just for his ridiculous strumming. Unless, of course, you invite me up to the attic to hear you."

"Would you care to do that?"

"But, of course. I get rather bored with you and Oliver both shut away working, and now Sarah has Jennie. I'd sit very quietly."

Please turn to page 35

## As I read the Stars

By EVE HILLIARD

**ARIES** (March 21-April 20): Shifting into new quarters? Dolling up the old homestead? Then, June 22 will be a joy, with June 23 tops. Others may find June 25 expensive but delightful.

**TAURUS** (April 21-May 20): Why stay home when there's any place else to go? Make a determined effort on June 22 to find fresh territory. I sniff romance in the breeze for June 24.

**GEMINI** (May 21-June 21): Take no risks and make no agreements on June 21 unless you are aware of all the facts and what you let yourself in for. June 27 favors a sound proposition.

**CANCER** (June 22-July 22): Out of the shadows into sunshine; drop that inferiority complex and gambol happily on June 21-22. News on June 23 may set your heart going pit-a-pat.

**LEO** (July 23-August 22): That royal will of yours may be called into play on June 22. Go determinedly after what you want throughout the week. June 27 will bring a victory.

**VIRGO** (August 23-September 23): Should June 21 set your mind working along serious lines, turn your attention towards potential friends. Ask favors on June 25. You'll get dynamic results.

**LIBRA** (September 24-October 23): A fine week for strengthening social or business ties. June 22 could renew an old friendship, and June 24 is likely to provide a romance.

**SCORPIO** (October 24-November 22): While this weekend favors long-distance plans and the development of ideas for travel or removals, action is likely to be postponed.

**SAGITTARIUS** (November 23-December 20): Plenty of hard work, although June 23 brings a ray of sunshine or an unexpected gift. June 25 inclines to financial recklessness.

**CAPRICORN** (December 21-January 19): Storm clouds in connection with older people could make June 22 difficult. Patience and tact will overcome this. June 25 excellent for partnerships.

**AQUARIUS** (January 20-February 19): Main feature of the week is your job or occupation. Unwelcome changes on June 24 or 26 should prove agreeable. All-clear June 27.

**PISCES** (February 20-March 20): Good times are favored on June 21. Love affairs or a mild speculation may brighten June 23 or 26. Nearly all should gain.

(The Australian Women's Weekly presents this astrological diary as a feature of interest only, without accepting any responsibility whatsoever for the statements contained in it.)



SARAH felt uncomfortable before the glow in Eliot's eyes. Venetia was doing this only because she was kind and a little bored. But Eliot, frighteningly alone, with no common ground between himself and his brother and unaware of how to approach his own child, was in a dangerous emotional state.

It was perfectly simple to see that. He could so easily misconstrue Venetia's kindness and when he discovered his mistake the result could be tragic.

Before he could say more, however, there was a bustle in the hall, the sound of voices, and Oliver appeared at the door.

He turned to say something to someone out of sight, then put out his hand and led into the room a tall, dark-haired young woman wearing a mink coat over a black dinner-jacket.

"Let me present," he said dramatically, "a very famous and beautiful lady, Miss Rachel Massey."

"Hullo, everybody," Rachel said in a warm, vibrant voice.

She was very good-looking and perfectly at ease. In that first glance at her Sarah could read both character and ruthlessness in her face.

Oliver went on to perform the introductions singly. Everyone had come in now, Tim and Burgess Reid and Aunt Florence and old Mrs. Foster. In the buzz of conversation Sarah heard only odd sentences spoken in Oliver's hearty voice.

"She hasn't read the part yet. Of course, one doesn't expect miracles, but one hopes for them. Tim, you may have something in common with Miss Massey. She loves sea travel. And this is my brother, Eliot."

Sarah turned from her conversation with Aunt Florence to watch them. She saw Eliot's pale, tense face grow even paler as Rachel said in her warm voice, "I've been wanting to meet you. You know my friend Lexie Adams didn't you?"

Eliot murmured something, and she went on, "You know that's the queerest thing, the way she went off without a word. I believe there's something phony about it, and I'm determined to find out what happened while I'm over here. I'm counting on you to help me."

Sarah saw Eliot's tight lips move. Then old Mrs. Foster's raucous voice sounded above the rest.

"Lexie Adams, did you say? You're not expecting to find her alive, are you? She's murdered, sure as fate."

The play was entertaining and Sarah should have been entranced, but other things kept niggling at her. There was Jennie's question as she had tucked her in, "Miss Stacey, did you remember to ask Uncle Oliver about my party?" indicating for the first time that after all Jennie was interested in the party.

There was the dramatically

## voice of a Dove

handsome appearance Oliver and Venetia made in evening clothes. Also, how unexpectedly distinguished Tim looked and how unexpectedly quiet he was.

Then there was Eliot's taut, controlled face as Rachel had talked to him about Lexie Adams, his agony kept beneath the surface, and all the time how the diamonds, Venetia's ear-rings and Aunt Florence's brooch and ring with its single superb stone sparkled.

When they arrived home the table in the dining-room was lighted by candles in branching crystal candelsticks, and the flickering light danced on the silver and made wavering pools on the polished surface of the table. There was a scent of burning logs and roses.

It seemed to Sarah as if they were still in the unreal and make-believe atmosphere of the theatre.

The women went upstairs, and Sarah, coming down first, found Oliver standing alone in front of the fire.

"I had something to ask you for Jennie," she said, seizing her opportunity. "She would like a party, and I think it would be a good thing for her. She should have some friends. She's—"

OLIVER interrupted her with a humorous glint in his eye.

"Now, Sarah, don't start bringing out all your arguments before you know whether I'm going to refuse or not. As it happens I think you're entirely right. Jennie should have a party."

Venetia and Eliot came into the room just then and Venetia, catching the last words, said interestedly, "What's this about a party?" She came over to Oliver and tucked her hand inside his arm.

"Sarah's been saying Jennie should have one," Oliver explained.

"Oh! Somehow she's not the sort of child one associates with parties. Who would she ask?"

"I think we could soon find some children," Sarah said.

"What do you think, Eliot? You're her father," Oliver's voice was perfectly genial, but — was it Sarah's imagination — she seemed to be aware of a contemptuous note in it. Or was that because of the quick, resentful flash that darkened Eliot's face.

"Since I imagine the expense of the party will be yours," he said, "the arrangements had better be yours also."

"Oh, come now," said Oliver. "I'm more than happy to give the child a party."

"Of course we are, Eliot," Venetia said. She smiled her sweet, kind smile. Eliot muttered something and turned away. But it was true, Sarah noticed, with a feeling almost of fear, that Venetia's kindness affected him deeply.

Sympathy was dangerous to

Continued from page 34

him in his melancholic condition. He was ready to fall in love with the first good-looking woman who noticed him. And that woman unfortunately was his own sister-in-law.

Rachel Massey came in then and Oliver began pouring drinks, talking in his hearty, paternal voice all the time.

"You're looking very grand to-night, Sarah. Did you enjoy the play? Good, wasn't it. But wait till they see our Rachel."

"Mrs. Hopkins wants to know when we sit down to dinner," came Tim's voice. "She says in another five minutes the turkey will be spoilt, but nothing can prevent it because she foretold such an event this morning. And one can't alter the leaves."

"You mean tea-leaves?" said Rachel. "You mean she reads cups? What an enchanting person she sounds."

"Oliver! Eliot!" The raucous cry came from the doorway. Old Mrs. Foster was standing there, the jewelled comb in her hair quivering importantly. Behind her came Aunt Florence, obviously distressed.

"Say nothing," she was whispering.

"Say nothing indeed! When there's been a theft? Oliver, Miss Stacey has had her diamond ring stolen."

Oliver took a step forward. "What! Is this true, Miss Stacey?"

Aunt Florence twisted her hands together in distress.

"I'm sure it's just lost."

"I should think so," said Venetia practically. "Stolen indeed! What nonsense. There's no one in this house who would steal a ring."

Mrs. Foster looked put out about the calm reception of her statement.

"Well, it's disappeared anyway," she muttered. "Explain that, will you?"

Tim came forward. "Where did you take your ring off, Miss Stacey?"

"I took it off to wash," Aunt Florence answered agitatedly.

"Then I went in to peep at Jennie. I hope you don't mind, Sarah. If she had been awake I was going to talk to her for a minute. But she was asleep. Then I remembered I had left my ring in the bathroom, so I went to get it."

"And it had gone?"

"Yes. But it must be somewhere. Please don't bother about it now."

"Perhaps it dropped on the floor and rolled into a corner," suggested Rachel. "Let's all go up and look."

"We've looked thoroughly already," old Mrs. Foster said. "The ring's been stolen, I tell you."

"Mother, please!" Oliver said firmly. "Of course the ring hasn't been stolen. It's a misunderstanding. Are you sure you didn't absentmindedly slip it in your bag, Miss Stacey?"

"Please turn to page 36

# DO as you like - when you like



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### ANNABELLE



"Do you really want me? I'm all wrapped up with a hot-water bag."

### BUTCH



"Phew, Slug! Guess who lives here!"



plied, "I shall look again." She was perfectly courteous, but now Sarah detected a light note of coldness in her voice. "I'm really quite sure it isn't there."

"The servants must be questioned," said Eliot abruptly.

Sarah was sure neither Mrs. Hopkins nor Petunia had been upstairs in that short interval. So if the ring were really stolen it must have been done by someone in this room. Suddenly she was realising that for the first time, and the knowledge was a little horrifying.

Her eyes went over the group, Eliot—what would he want with a ring, with both wife and lover dead; Tim with his nonchalance; Oliver disturbed, but not yet seriously worried; Burgess Reid expressing well-bred distaste; Rachel suave and handsome; Venetia showing the concern of a hostess at a misadventure in her house.

"That Petunia should be questioned first," insisted old Mrs. Foster. "I don't like the look of that girl, and the rows about with a bus conductor. He probably spends all his money on football pools, and can't afford to buy her a ring."

As if she had heard her name, at that moment Petunia appeared at the door. She instantly sensed something was wrong, and her mouth hung open a moment before she spoke.

"Please, sir, Mrs. Hopkins says if you wait another five minutes—"

"There won't be no dinner," Tim finished pleasantly. "What about it, Oliver? Hadn't we better eat?"

Oliver ignored him.

"Petunia," he said, "have you been up to the bathroom on the first floor, or have you seen anyone else go up within the past ten minutes?"

"Why, no, sir. I've been in the kitchen with Mrs. Hopkins. She can bear me out. Except for just as you all arrived. Why—" Her voice quavered. She looked round helplessly. "Is there something wrong?"

"Please!" Aunt Florence interrupted beseechingly. "Please, Oliver, don't bother any more about it."

"Bother!" exclaimed old Mrs. Foster. She was a war horse bearing the guns. "If you ask me, it's becoming a matter for the police."

"Don't be absurd, mother," said Venetia with surprising presence of mind. "Sarah will go upstairs and have a quick look. Won't you, Sarah? And the rest of us will start dinner."

Thankful to get out of the room, Sarah nodded and went. Of course, there was no sign of the ring in the bathroom. She hadn't expected there would be, though she hadn't begun to think of an alternative solution. She searched the stairs carefully and the passage to Jennie's room.

Jennie was sound asleep. Sarah could hear her quiet breathing as she stood at the door. There was a distant roar of buses along Kensington Road, and someone's footsteps on the street outside.

No sound came from downstairs. Were they all eating their turkey in a well-bred way while the roses, too late and delicate for the warm room, shed their petals, and the candles winked on Venetia's diamonds, and Oliver's benevolent, good-humoured glance went over his guests?

Someone at that well-ordered, dignified dinner-table had Aunt Florence's diamond ring, because it was impossible to suspect either Mrs. Hopkins or Petunia. One of the party was a thief.

Sarah felt an arm round her waist. She started violently.

"Hullo, little one," said Tim affectionately.

Little one! "If you think that's funny—" she began indignantly.

"A term of endearment only. You're a fine woman, Sarah. If only you'd love me a little."

"Tim, for heavens sake! You don't even like me."

"On the contrary, I admire you a great deal."

Continued from page 35

"Well, anyway, this is neither the time nor place for a sentimental conversation. Something serious has happened and why aren't you having dinner, anyway?"

"I've come up to help you. Any luck?"

Sarah said slowly, "Did you expect me to have?" and somehow was grateful for the complete sobriety of his reply.

"No. Frankly I didn't," he said. "Sarah, there's something odd going on. I don't particularly like it."

"What do you mean? Something besides Aunt Florence losing her ring?" She was almost afraid to put that question.

Tim nodded. When his face was lean and serious like that she respected him a great deal more. But he had a slightly dangerous look which surely the circumstances didn't warrant.

"Aren't you just being a little superstitious? Because your sister died here you think the house is bad."

HE didn't appear to hear her. He was pursuing a thought of his own.

"There's a tension. Aren't you aware of it? No one's happy. Eliot looks on the verge of melancholia. Venetia, beneath all her poise, is as nervous as a kitten. She takes refuge in ill-health. The old lady drags herself with food. And you've seen what they've done to Jennie."

"Oliver?" Sarah questioned automatically.

"Oliver may just have an innocent, happy nature—or else his ways are devious also. There's something."

"It's tied up with that mystery about Lexie Adams," Sarah said involuntarily.

Tim nodded. "You may be right. To-morrow I'll do a little research."

Before breakfast in the morn-

ing Aunt Florence telephoned Sarah.

Sarah had been up early, because at four-thirty Eliot had begun playing love songs and was still doing so. Even down on the ground floor she could hear the faint, gentle sound of the piano.

When she learned to sleep through these disturbances and read no significance into them—such as the type of music Eliot played being a guide to the state of his mind—she would be much better.

Just at present, from strain and lack of sleep, she had reached the state of imagining things, and wondering if the satisfying of her curiosity was worth the sacrifice of her health.

Aunt Florence probably hadn't slept either. Sarah said, "Good morning, darling. How are you? Did you manage to get some sleep last night?"

"Sarah," came Aunt Florence's voice on a disturbingly sober note, "you may not believe it, but I have my ring back."

"What, did you find you had it after all?"

"No, dear. It was left here this morning."

"By whom?"

"Oliver, from the description Bertha gave. She said the man simply handed her an envelope with the ring in it, and said to apologise to me for the worry I had had. That's all."

"How odd!" said Sarah.

"What am I to do about it?"

"There's nothing you can do."

"But shouldn't I thank someone?"

"I don't know," said Sarah slowly. She looked round to make sure that she was alone. "It almost seems as if questions might be embarrassing."

"That's what I thought, too. Sarah, there's something queer."

"I know," Sarah agreed quickly.

"You must stay and find out what it is, dear. For Jennie's sake."

Wuff, Snuff & Tuff

by TIM



She added that about Jennie, but Sarah knew Aunt Florence's curiosity was almost as great as her own. At that stage she wouldn't have been able to bear not finding out what was going on.

"Of course I'll stay," said Sarah, "if I can stand enough sleepless nights."

She started as she realised that Oliver was at the door. She wondered how much he had overheard. He was smiling his familiar, friendly smile. He looked bright-eyed and handsome, as if he had slept well.

"Good morning, Sarah. Did I hear you say Eliot's playing had kept you awake? With all due respect for his genius, we can't let that go on happening. I'll speak to him."

"No, please don't," Sarah said quickly. She had an intuition that to take Eliot's playing in the night from him would be dangerous. It was apparently his only form of escape. "It won't disturb me when I'm used to it." Then she added flatly, "Aunt Florence says she has her ring."

"Yes, I believe she has." Was he going to say no more than that? He behaved as if it

were no more than a hair ribbon Aunt Florence had lost.

"But—did you find it on the floor after all?"

Oliver laid his hand on her shoulder.

"We'll say no more about it, shall we?" he observed pleasantly. "Your aunt is gracious enough to understand how upset Venetia and I were at having such a thing happen in our house. Where's Jennie? Are we all ready for breakfast?"

Sarah realised, to her chagrin, that she was to hear no more. Whom was Oliver protecting? Or had the ring been on the floor all the time?

Well, if Oliver expected her to show curiosity she would disappoint him. She went out of the room, saying over her shoulder, "How's Venetia this morning?"

"Oh, she's not so well. Her cough's troubling her a little. But she's coming down to breakfast."

Venetia did come to breakfast, but Oliver had been right when he said she didn't look so well. There were hollows under her eyes as if she hadn't slept and the rouge stood out on her cheeks.

Please turn to page 37

## Mary's Head of Her Class Now!

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MARY'S COLDS used to give her a bad time at school. They sapped her strength, and made it so hard to study. Colds kept her home a lot, too. No wonder poor Mary lagged so far behind her class!



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Just rub on...



CLEARs THE WHOLE FAMILY'S COLDS



# Voice of a Dove

Continued from page 36

BUT, when Sarah asked her if she felt all right, she said, "Yes, very well, thank you," and began to toy with a piece of toast as if she had no appetite.

Tim came in with his usual cheerful nonsense, but for once it didn't irritate Sarah. She was grateful for something to break the uncomfortable tension.

"Where are you taking me to-day, Jennie?" he asked. "Shall we ask Miss Stacey's permission to go to the wax-works, or would you prefer something more morbid?"

"Jennie's going to have a party shortly," Oliver chose to announce in a jolly voice. "She has to get a party frock. Perhaps you'd like to take her shopping, Venetia."

Venetia looked up. Sarah fancied she winced slightly. "Oh, not to-day, Oliver."

"And why not to-day?" Oliver inquired cheerfully. "I really don't feel up to it."

"You don't mean you're still worrying about last night's episode? But that is all cleared up, I told you. We can now forget it, thanks to the generous view Miss Stacey took of the affair."

He addressed them all lightly. "Venetia's foolish enough to have let it give her a bad night. Of course, it's an unpleasant thing to have happen in one's house, even when the explanation is perfectly innocent."

Venetia's large, tired eyes were on Oliver. She began to cough a little in a strained way. She did seem rather ill this morning. Had Oliver told her anything of how the ring had been found? Did he enjoy keeping people in the dark?

Sarah realised suddenly that Eliot was standing at the door watching, his face like a cat's, thin and concentrated. He's a little queer, Sarah thought uneasily. Heaven knew what he might do if he had fallen in love with Venetia.

"Miss Stacey!" That was Jennie's urgent whisper. "Miss Stacey, am I really to have a party?"

Sarah nodded. "But it's not even my birthday."

Tim caught the whisper and leaned across the table. "It's mine next Wednesday. You have the party, and I'll grow the year older. How's that?"

Jennie looked up at Sarah. Her face was eager. She looked almost like a normal child.

"Could I, Miss Stacey? Could I have my party on Uncle Tim's birthday?"

"Ask Aunt Venetia, dear," "Could I, Aunt Venetia?" "Next Wednesday," Venetia said vaguely. "Why, I daresay. Sarah, will you—"

Sarah said, "Yes, I'll arrange everything." She understood now that Venetia had moods, she was a little neurotic, she couldn't take things in her stride the way Oliver could.

Then Eliot came in. He hadn't said anything and remained silent as he poured coffee and sat down. His face had its usual brooding look. He didn't look like the kind of person who would have been playing love songs half the night.

Jennie wanted to go and tell Mrs. Hopkins about her party. She slipped out to the kitchen and burst out with the news.

"Mrs. Hopkins, I'm to have a party on Uncle Tim's birthday next week, and I'm to get a new dress, and will you make me a cake?"

Mrs. Hopkins' kindly eyes met Sarah's over Jennie's head. They were full of approval. "Indeed I'll make you a cake."

"I've never had a party before," Jennie went on. "Miss Stacey thought of it. Mrs. Hopkins, will you see what it says in your cup about my party?"

"Well, now, dear—" Mrs. Hopkins was obviously reluctant. "I've finished my tea. I've poured the leaves out."

"Have some more," begged Jennie. "Please!" She was dancing on her thin legs, her eyes were sparkling. Sarah had never seen her so animated.

Neither had Mrs. Hopkins, for reluctantly she lifted the teapot and poured another cup of tea. "I swore last night I'd never do this again," she said to Sarah.

"Neither you should," said Sarah. "Not after the things you've already been telling Jennie. Death in the house and things like that. As if the arrangement of tealeaves shows the future."

"Well, I saw about the turkey getting spoilt last night, and about that nice man for you who'll come along, never fear. It's more than the leaves, dear," she went on earnestly. "It's something that comes over me. I see things perfectly plain as if I'm an instrument."

For a moment her eyes were curiously opaque. Then she said briskly, "Don't let it worry you. If it's to come it'll come no matter what. You can't change destiny."

IMPATIENTLY, Jennie said, "Mrs. Hopkins, don't waste time talking. See what the leaves say about my party. Please!"

Mrs. Hopkins looked at Sarah. She shook her head helplessly.

"I can't disappoint her, can I? I daresay it won't hurt for this once."

Sarah didn't answer. She found herself suddenly tense as she watched Mrs. Hopkins drink the tea, telling herself the whole thing was nonsense; that there was no possible way of telling the future by the way the tealeaves lay in the bottom of a cup.

Though, of course, it wasn't the leaves Mrs. Hopkins read. It was the way that staring at them seemed to make her project herself into the future.

Mrs. Hopkins tipped the dregs of the tea out, and turned the cup carefully in the curved palms of her hands. Jennie

hopped on the other leg, her face shining.

"Well, then," said Mrs. Hopkins portentously.

Don't! Sarah begged silently, then was glad she hadn't spoken the word aloud. What a fool she was growing, letting Mrs. Hopkins' superstitious worry her.

Mrs. Hopkins stared at the interior of the cup. She seemed to hold it interminably.

"Well, what?" Jennie demanded impatiently. "What do you see?"

"Just wait." Mrs. Hopkins' voice was curiously thick. She held up one plump hand. To her dismay, Sarah saw that it was trembling.

"Stop it!" she whispered then, and now her voice was audible. "Stop it, Mrs. Hopkins."

Mrs. Hopkins put the cup down clumsily.

"But you're not saying anything," Jennie said. "What did you see?"

"I saw you in a white frock, very sweet and lacy, like a little princess."

Jennie gave a skip. "And am I having a nice party?"

"Very nice, dear. Now run along."

"Yes, run upstairs," said Sarah. "Get out your books. I'll be up in a moment."

"Miss Stacey, I must be going to have the party if Mrs. Hopkins saw the dress. Do you think Aunt Venetia will buy me a white dress?"

"I expect so. Run along." Jennie went, skipping lightly, and Mrs. Hopkins said feebly, as if she had to say something. "I've never seen her like that before, so full of life. You're good for her, Miss Stacey."

"Maybe," said Sarah absently. She went across to the table and picked up the cup Mrs. Hopkins had set down. It had nothing in it but a meaningless sprinkle of leaves, nothing to make Mrs. Hopkins

## OUR GARDENING SERVICE

READERS may obtain leaflets on subjects of current interest to home gardeners by sending this coupon with a stamped, addressed envelope to Box 4088, G.P.O., Sydney.

Any ONE of the following titles may be selected:

- How to Plant, Prune, and Spray Roses.
- Winter Vegetable Culture.
- How to Grow Good Spring Flowers.
- Planting, Pruning, and Spraying Fruit Trees.

Name of leaflet (one only) .....

Stamped (3d.), addressed envelope is enclosed.

tremble. The woman had fancies, that was all. And morbid ones at that.

"Mrs. Hopkins, what did you really see in this cup?" she asked.

"Never mind, love."

"But something frightened you. What possibly could in this?" She pointed to the leaves contemptuously. "You're letting your imagination run away with you."

"It's not the leaves, love. It's something that comes over me." "Then what came over you this morning?"

"I can't explain. A sort of darkness. There was Jennie in a white dress and—and—" Mrs. Hopkins clutched Sarah's arm in a painful grip. There was perspiration shining on her forehead.

"Oh, I said I wouldn't do this again, didn't I? It was Jennie who inveigled me into it. A child's party, what could be more harmless, I thought."

"Jennie in a white dress," Sarah said urgently. "What else? You've got to tell me what else."

"I can't. I can't, I tell you. I don't know. Just a sort of darkness."

Her grip on Sarah's arm grew more painful. "But don't let her have that party, Miss Stacey."

Sarah at last extricated her-

self from the hard grip. She was trembling a little herself, she realised. So foolish—an old woman with a teacup—and the dark mystery it contained.

"I think you need another cup of tea, Mrs. Hopkins. You mustn't take these things so seriously."

"But don't I always see them right? Didn't I see death before poor Mr. Eliot's wife had that fall? Didn't I see Mr. Tim's visit long before they'd even heard from him? And then you with your red head. Who was to know Jennie would get a governess with red hair?"

"I think," said Sarah a little unsteadily, "your resolution to not read your cup any more is a very good one. It's too upsetting."

"It is that. But it's getting almost that I have to. Do you see what I mean? If things could be prevented by my giving warnings—"

But by now Sarah was getting a grip on herself.

"What things?" she asked. "Nothing's going to happen. You're letting your imagination run away with you."

Mrs. Hopkins shook her head slowly. "I wish I could believe that. But I can't. And if you'll take my advice you'll make it up to Jennie some way, but you won't let her have that party."

To be continued

## "Now I know! Even 'problem' floors will come up shiny-bright with VELVET soap"

says MRS. HARP of WOOLAHRA, N.S.W.

to Aunt Jenny

Scrubbing a kitchen floor can be the housewife's hardest task, but when Aunt Jenny visited Mrs. Harp at her modern home she found her making light work of this chore. Mrs. Harp uses mild extra-soapy Velvet for all the rubbing and scrubbing, and her hands tell her how gentle Velvet is.

"I used to find floor scrubbing and polishing a frightful chore until I used Velvet. This rubber floor seemed to get dirty quicker than any in the house," Mrs. Harp told Aunt Jenny.

"I can see how quickly you're doing the job!" exclaims Aunt Jenny.

"Yes! And without polishing, Velvet brings back the brand-new lustre to my rubber floor!"



Pure mild Velvet is so kind to your hands — so gentle to your clothes. Here's why Velvet-washed clothes last longer.



FABRICS WASHED WITH ORDINARY SOAP — seen under a magnifying glass — look frayed and worn out, because hard rubbing is necessary with skimpy inferior suds. And look how those weary-willy suds leave dirt ingrained in the weave.



FABRICS WASHED WITH VELVET SOAP — seen under a magnifying glass — stay strong as new, wash after wash because no hard rubbing is needed — yet not a trace of dirt is left behind. Velvet's extra soapy suds are kind to the most delicate skin and gentle to your clothes, too!







A GOOD SUBSTITUTE for a big bank balance is imagination. Details of how this pleasant and attractive living-room was furnished at remarkably small cost are given on this page.

## USE YOUR IMAGINATION



NONE OF THE FURNITURE in this room was expensive, but the overall effect is smart and new-looking. It contains helpful pointers to young couples on a budget. The floor-covering is linoleum. The yellow cushions and curtain swag look well against green walls.

● What is imagination? If, when confronted with four bare walls, you can visualise the room as it will be completed, if out of ugliness you can create beauty, then you have imagination.

IN previous articles I have discussed the practical aspects of decorating, the importance of color in the home, and the need to use imagination.

A reader has asked me just what I mean by imagination, a question I find difficult to answer without illustration, so I have made it the subject of this week's article.

Imagination and ingenuity combined will achieve miracles, and some of the most attractive homes have been furnished with little else.

Many girls are marrying today and facing the prospect of furnishing their flat or home on what seemed an adequate budget when first discussed but which seems lamentably small by today's prices.

Many will not be content to compromise with the less attractive articles offering at the prices they can afford. They will prefer to spend less money, and more time, creating their own decorative effects.

The two rooms illustrated have plenty of originality and would not be very costly.

In the living-room is a day-bed converted into an attractive settee by the ingenious use of cushions strapped to the wall. (Your ironmonger should be able to supply the rings which will have to be plugged into the wall.)

This settee is covered in dark grey furnishing alpaca, which

looks very sophisticated and smart, and the two small chairs are covered in black-and-white mattress ticking.

The two formal-looking tables are merely boxes covered in felt.

The lamp bases are newel posts painted and fitted for electricity.

The coffee-table started life as three nursery tables—repainted and grouped together they serve their purpose ideally.

The pictures on the wall would look scrappy and much too small when dispersed around the room,

but as a mass arrangement are most decorative.

The dining-room relies largely on color for its effectiveness.

The chairs are ones which can be picked up very cheaply at most second-hand shops. The table, although elegant in design, was also cheap because it needed stripping and some very minor repairs.

The sideboard looked very unattractive, and outdated until the paint brush was applied.

The chairs and table are painted flat black, as you can see, but an excitingly "different" look is achieved by painting the top of the table and sideboard coral-pink and giving it a marble-like finish.

This is done by trailing feathers dipped in black and white paint across the already dry surface.

Practice this well before taking the plunge—it requires a light touch, but is really not difficult.

By JOAN MARTIN





Spoons and forks, particularly, need at least weekly care. Good taste demands that they be sparkling always.

Liquid Silvo is the easy, quick way to keep all silverware radiant and because it is gentle in action, you may use it on the most delicate silver.



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The children are more likely to "get through" the winter without coughs and colds if their sensitive powers are strengthened with a course of Angier's. The pronounced tonic effect of this palatable emulsion helps in warding off coughs and similar ailments. After illness, Angier's Emulsion aids recovery.

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**IF BACK ACHES TRY A KIDNEY HOUSECLEANING**

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THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY - JUNE 25, 1952

## NOTIONS



### No. 258.—BOY'S OR GIRL'S COOGANS

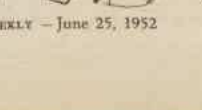
Trim style for the boy or girl and available cut out ready to make in a good quality corduroy velveteen, and the color choice includes beige, blue, grey, and brown.

Sizes, length 29in. for 2 years, 22/6; 31in. for 3 years, 23/9; 33in. for 4 years, 25/3; 37in. for 5-6 years, 27/6. Postage and registration 1/8 extra.

### BEGINNER'S PATTERN

F6985.—Girl's skirt. Beginner's pattern. Requires 4yd. 54in. material. Sizes 18in., 20in., 23in., and 27in. lengths for 2, 4, 6, and 8yrs. Price 2/-.

Fashion Patterns may be obtained immediately from Fashion Patterns Pty. Ltd., 645 Hurra St., Ultimo, Sydney (postal address Box 400, G.P.O., Sydney). For man's readers should address orders to Box 46-D, G.P.O., Hobart; New Zealand readers to Box 886, G.P.O., Auckland.



### No. 259.—FOUR D'OYLES

Four very attractive d'oyles traced ready to embroider yourself. Two measure 8in. by 8in., and two measure 5in. by 11in. The material is a good quality heavy linen in cream; sheer linen in shades of white, sky-blue, green, lemon, and pink; also a British fine cotton in shades of blue, lemon, pink, and green. The lace to finish is not supplied.

Price, linen, set of four, 4/9. Postage 7d. extra. 1/3 each. Postage 3d. extra.

Price, cotton, set of four, 3/9. Postage 7d. extra. 1/- each. Postage 3d. extra.

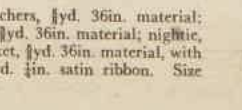
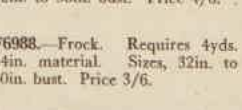
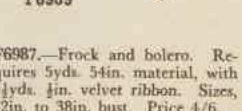
### No. 260.—TENNIS FROCK

Smart style for tennis wear. It is available cut out ready to make yourself, with full instructions given, which are simple to follow. The material is a good quality white pique. Sizes 32in. and 34in. bust, 26/9; 36in. and 38in. bust, 28/11. Postage and registration 2/9 extra.

### No. 261.—BREAKFAST CLOTH AND SERVIETTES

An attractive cloth with matching serviettes. It is available in a good quality check cotton, and the color choice includes yellow, white, black; red, white, black; green, white, black; blue, white, black. Measures 48in. by 48in. and supplied with applique pieces traced for you to embroider. Serviettes, size 11in. by 11in.

Price, cloth, 19/11. Postage and registration 1/10 extra. Serviettes, 1/3 each. Postage 3d. extra.



## Fashion PATTERNS

F6987

F6986

F6984

F6983

F6988

F6989

NOTE: Please make a second color choice. No C.O.D. orders accepted. All Needlework Notions over 4/11 sent by registered post. Send orders for Needlework Notions (note prices) to address given on this page.

F6983.—Housegown. Requires 5yds. 54in. width material. Sizes 32in. to 38in. bust. Price 4/9.

F6984.—Blouse. Requires 2yds. 36in. width material. Sizes 32in. to 38in. bust. Price 2/6.

F6986.—Matron's frock. Requires 3yds. 54in. material, with 14yds. 36in. contrasting material. Sizes 38in. to 46in. bust. Price 3/6.

F6987.—Frock and bolero. Requires 5yds. 54in. material, with 5yds. 4in. velvet ribbon. Sizes 32in. to 38in. bust. Price 4/6.

F6988.—Frock. Requires 4yds. 54in. material. Sizes 32in. to 40in. bust. Price 3/6.

F6989.—Layette. Requires: Pilchers, 4yd. 36in. material; slip, 4yd. 36in. material; frock, 14yd. 36in. material; nightie, 14yd. 36in. material; matinee jacket, 4yd. 36in. material, with 2yd. 4in. lace edging, and 2yd. 4in. satin ribbon. Size infants. Price 4/9.



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make



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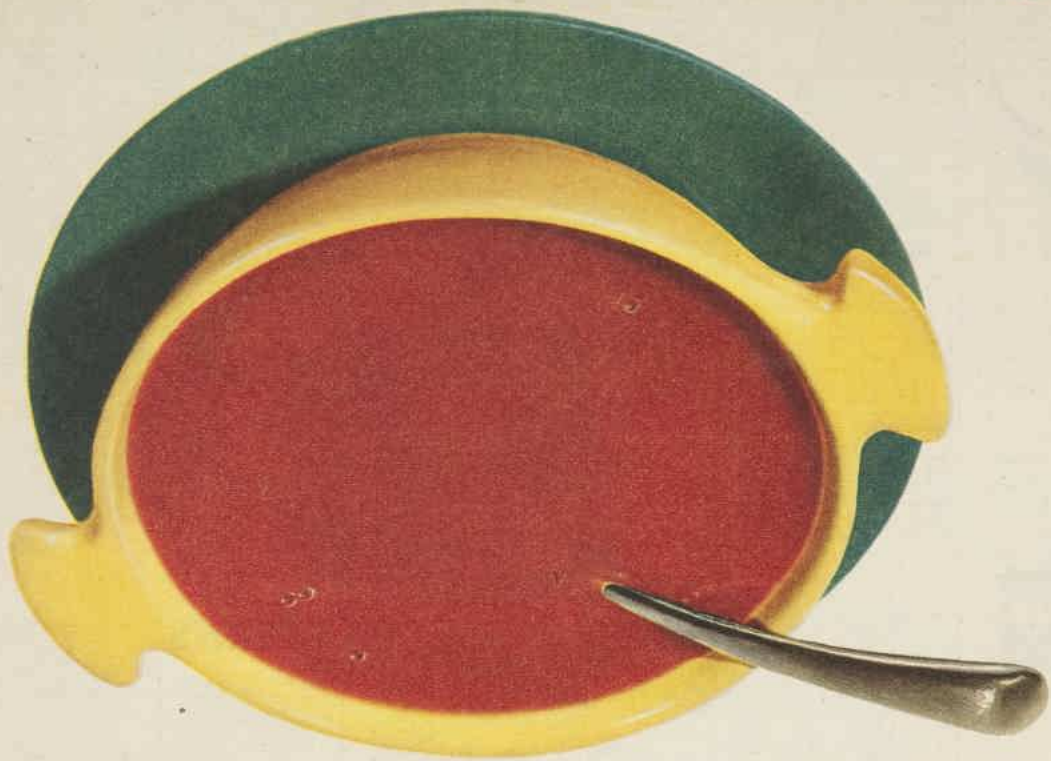
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Page 39



**Kia-ora** makes the best Tomato Soup.



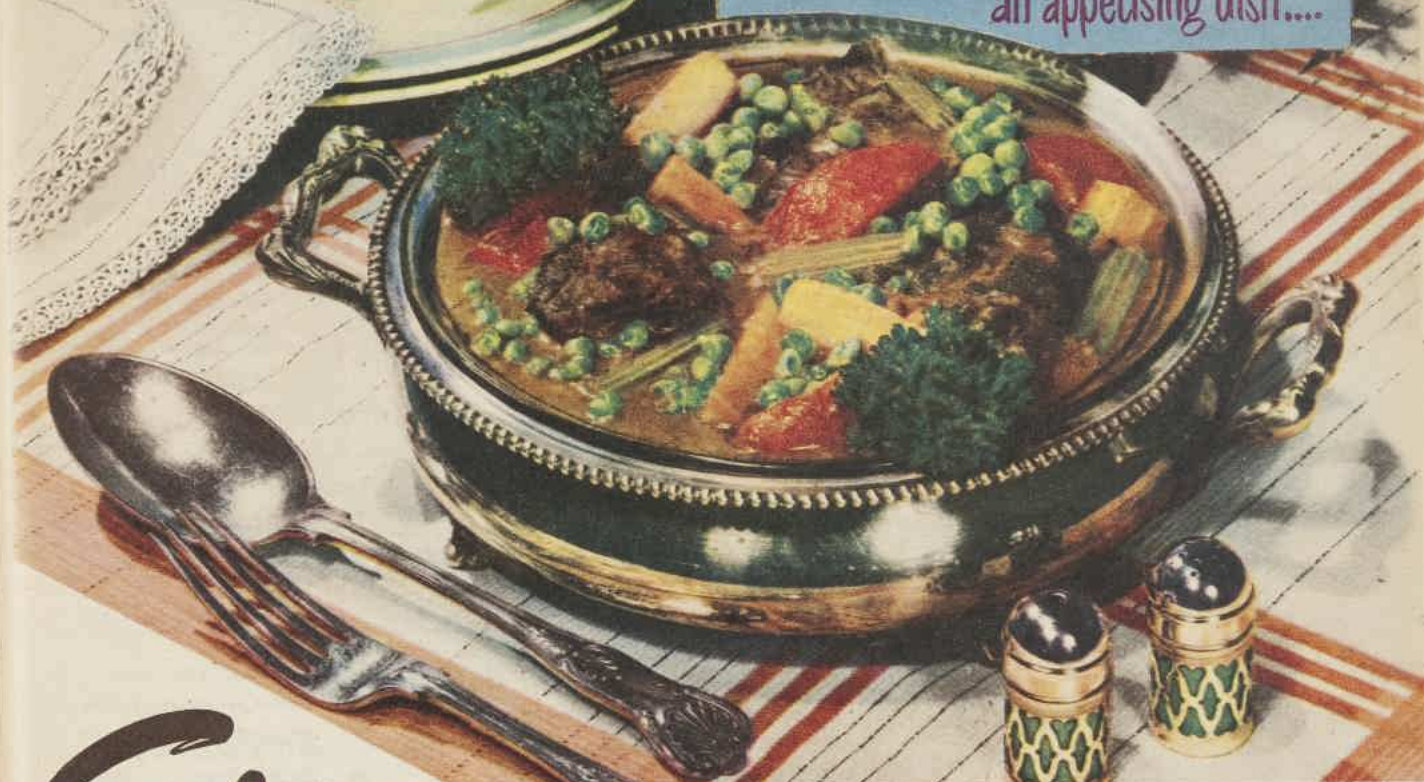
*Whichever way you look at it ~*



**Kia-ora** makes the best Tomato Soup.



Long, slow cooking brings out the flavor of all the ingredients and makes an appetising dish....



**SPICED STEAK CASSEROLE**, above, is made from bladebone steak made tender by long, gentle cooking with vegetables and spices. Celery, tomatoes, and green peas, which improve both flavor and color, are added for the last 45 minutes of cooking time to preserve their shape and appearance. See recipe on this page.

# Slow cooked dinners

**Casserole cookery is economical as well as easy. The long, slow cooking makes tender the less expensive cuts of meat and develops rich flavors.**

**THIS** method of cooking also helps to make a small amount of meat go farther. The addition of vegetables and cereals results in a satisfying and appetising one-dish meal.

The food is served piping hot because the cooking dish is also the serving dish.

Ovenproof glass, earthenware, or colored ovenware china casseroles should be treated with care.

Here are a few points to remember when using them:

- A new casserole should be filled with cold water, placed in a slow oven, and the water brought slowly to boiling point.
- Do not place a cold casserole in a very hot oven.
- Never place an empty casserole or one that is wet on the outside into a hot oven.
- Always keep the lid on a casserole when cooking in it, unless otherwise stated in the recipe. To prevent sticking grease the edges of the lid.

All spoon measurements are level.

## SPICED STEAK CASSEROLE

One and a half pounds bladebone steak, 2 tablespoons fat, 1 large sliced onion, 4 lb. carrots, 3 dessertspoons flour, ½ teaspoon nutmeg, 1 teaspoon brown sugar, 1 teaspoon salt, pinch cayenne pepper, 1 dessertspoon tomato

sauce, 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce, 1½ cups stock or water, 2 tomatoes, 1 stick celery, ½ cup shelled peas, parsley.

Cut steak into service-sized pieces, coat lightly with 2 extra dessertspoons flour. Brown on all sides in hot fat. Remove, place in casserole. Add sliced onion to fat and cook until soft but not brown. Stir in flour, brown lightly. Add nutmeg, sugar, salt, pepper, sauces, and stock. Stir until boiling. Pour over meat. Add carrots, scraped and cut into large wedges. Cover, cook in moderate oven 1½ hours. Lift lid, add celery cut into 1 in. lengths, tomatoes (washed, dried, and cut into wedges), and shelled green peas. Cover again and cook a further 40 to 45 minutes.

## BY OUR FOOD AND COOKERY EXPERTS

Serve hot in dish in which it was cooked, and garnish with parsley.

## OVEN-COOKED STEAK CURRY

One pound chuck steak, 1 tablespoon fat, 1 medium onion, 1 dessertspoon flour, 1 teaspoon gravy browning, 1 dessertspoon curry powder (or more or less according to taste), 1½ cups stock or water, 1 tablespoon sultanas, 1 teaspoon brown sugar, 1 dessertspoon lemon juice, 1 chopped or sliced carrot, 1 green apple, salt and pepper to taste.

Trim steak, cut into ½ in. cubes. Brown slowly and thoroughly in hot fat in heavy saucepan, add sliced onion, and brown. Add flour, gravy browning, and curry powder, blended smoothly with the stock or water. Stir until boiling, then add sultanas, sugar, lemon juice, peeled, chopped apples, carrot, salt and pepper. Place in casserole, cover, and bake in moderate oven approximately 2½ hours until steak is tender. Serve hot with fluffy boiled rice and other vegetables.

## OVEN-BRAISED OX-TAIL

One ox-tail, 1 tablespoon flour, salt, pepper, 1 tablespoon fat, 1 large onion, 1½ pints water, pinch dried herbs, 1 blade of mace (or pinch of nutmeg), 1 large carrot, 2 sticks celery, extra blended flour for thickening, chopped parsley.

Wash ox-tail well, cut into joints, trim off excess fat. Roll well in flour, pepper and salt. Brown lightly in hot fat in frying-pan or saucepan. Lift out into casserole dish. Add sliced onion to fat, allow to brown. Drain off surplus fat, add water, herbs, and mace. Stir until boiling. Thicken slightly with a little extra blended flour. Pour over ox-tail in casserole. Cover and cook in moderate

oven 2 hours. Add sherry or white wine, carrots cut into thick rings, and chopped celery. Replace lid and cook 50 to 60 minutes longer until carrots are quite soft.

## LAMB STEW WITH RICE

One and half pounds scrag end of neck of mutton, flour, salt, pepper, 1 tablespoon fat, 1 onion, 1 pint water, 1 green apple, 1 small swede turnip, 1 tablespoon chopped parsley, 2 tablespoons washed, uncooked rice.

Cut meat into cubes, removing as much bone as possible. Coat well with flour, salt, and pepper. Brown lightly in hot fat, lift out into casserole. Add sliced onion to fat and cook until soft but not brown. Drain off excess fat, add water, chopped apple, diced swede turnip, parsley, and rice. Continue stirring until boiling. Pour over meat in casserole, cover tightly, and cook very slowly in moderate oven for 2 hours.

## BROWNED RABBIT WITH PINEAPPLE

One rabbit, 2 tablespoons flour, salt, pepper, 3 dessertspoons bacon fat, 4 slices pineapple (½ in. thick), pineapple skin and core, 2½ cups water, 1 onion, 2 cups cooked macaroni, 1 cup white sauce, 1-3rd cup grated cheese, parsley.

Remove tail joint from rabbit, cut into joints. Soak ½ hour in warm salted water. Cover pineapple core and skin with the water, cook 15 minutes. Strain, reserving 2 cups of liquid. Coat dried rabbit joints with seasoned flour, brown in bacon fat. Remove, add sliced onion, and brown. Place rabbit and onion in casserole, add pineapple liquid. Cover and cook in moderate oven 1½ to 2 hours. Sauté pineapple slices in bacon fat. Heat macaroni with sauce, place round edge of serving-dish, top with grated cheese and parsley. Arrange rabbit joints and pineapple slices in centre.

## GASTON BEEF STEW

Quarter-pound salt pork (salted breast of pork will do), 1½ lb. round or topside steak, 1 tablespoon flour, ½ teaspoon salt, pinch pepper, 1 clove finely chopped garlic, 1 medium onion, 1 cup water or meat stock, ½ cup tinned tomato juice, 3 or 4 peppercorns, 1 or 2 cloves, 1 tablespoon chopped parsley, ½ bay leaf, ½ cup dry sherry or white wine, 3 small carrots, 1 stick celery.

Cut pork into small pieces, sauté in large heavy saucepan until a quantity of fat melts out. Add steak, cut into cubes, brown lightly over quick heat. Add flour, salt, pepper, garlic, onion (sliced), water or stock, tomato juice, peppercorns, cloves, parsley, and bay leaf. Stir until boiling, turn into casserole.





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...yet protects  
us for hours"

...say the lovely  
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and jazz has begun.  
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lights glare,  
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air.  
O Sadie and Maisie and Edna and  
May,  
What will poor father and mother  
say

In the "wee small hours" if there's "flu" to  
endure.

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**Woods' Great Peppermint Cure.**

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Story of a self-made aristocrat's successes and disappointments—he  
reached his material goal, but failed in his emotional ventures.

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SHAKESPEARE HEAD PRESS  
Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide.

## Readers' prizes



SPAGHETTI is used as a base for Continental goulash, an  
appetising and satisfying dish most suitable for cold-weather  
dinners. Noodles, or rice, when it is available, may be used  
instead of spaghetti. See recipe on this page.

Potatoes baked in their jackets, halved,  
scooped out, and filled with savory liver mix-  
ture win the first prize of £5 in this week's  
cookery contest.

THE potato pulp is  
seasoned and creamed,  
and piled back on to the  
liver mixture. The dish  
looks very tempting and  
you will enjoy the flavor  
combination.

Consolation prizewinner  
Continental goulash is fla-  
voured with caraway seeds. If  
preferred, dried or fresh herbs,  
bay-leaves, or mace may be  
used instead of caraway seeds.  
All spoon measurements are  
level.

### LIVER-STUFFED POTATOES

Six medium-sized potatoes, 1  
dessertspoon shortening, 2  
tablespoons milk, salt and  
pepper to taste, 1 tablespoon  
chopped parsley, 2 cups diced  
cooked liver (or kidney, lamb,  
or veal), 3 tablespoons diced  
bacon, 1 tablespoon chopped  
onion, 1 tablespoon fat, 2 table-  
spoons flour, 1 pint stock or  
water.

Wash and dry potatoes,  
prick skins, bake in moderate  
oven until tender. Cut in  
halves lengthwise, scoop out  
pulp, leaving 1 in. thick case.  
Mash potato, beat until creamy  
with shortening, milk, salt,  
pepper, parsley, and half the  
onion. Melt fat, add remaining  
onion and bacon, cook until  
tender, remove. Stir in flour,

brown lightly, or add gravy  
browning. Add stock or water,  
stir until boiling. Season, add  
liver, bacon, and onion. Fill  
into potato-cases, spoon or  
pipe creamed potato on top.  
Reheat in oven, serve gar-  
nished with parsley.

First Prize of £5 to Mrs. L.  
Harrison, 62 Pine St., Cam-  
meray, N.S.W.

### CONTINENTAL GOULASH

One onion, 2 tablespoons fat,  
2 tablespoons flour, 1 teaspoon  
gravy browning, 1 teaspoon  
caraway seeds, 1 lb. chuck  
steak, 2 cups water, 1 teaspoon  
salt, pinch pepper, cooked  
spaghetti, rice, or noodles, 2  
tablespoons cheese, paprika.

Brown chopped onion in  
melted fat. Remove. Cut  
steak into 1 1/2 in. cubes, roll in  
flour, add to pan, brown on all  
sides. Return onion, add salt,  
pepper, caraway seeds, gravy  
browning, and water. Cover  
and simmer 2 to 2 1/2 hours or  
pressure cook 20 to 25 minutes.  
Place a layer of cooked spa-  
ghetti, rice, or noodles in bot-  
tom of greased casserole. Add  
meat mixture, top with cheese,  
lightly sprinkle with paprika.  
Place in oven to reheat. Serve  
garnished with parsley.

Consolation Prize of £1 to  
Mrs. M. S. Hewlett, 22 Ryan  
St., East Brunswick, Mel-  
bourne.

### Basic Recipe No. 8

## KITCHEN CUT-OUTS

THIS is the eighth of a  
series of basic recipes  
which are being published  
weekly. Cut them out as  
they appear and paste them  
into your recipe book for  
easy reference.

### SHORTCRUST PASTRY

Eight ounces plain flour, 1  
teaspoon baking powder (or  
2oz. self-raising flour and 6oz.  
plain flour), pinch salt, 4oz.  
good shortening, 4 to 5 table-  
spoons water, squeeze lemon  
juice.

Sift dry ingredients thor-  
oughly, rub in shortening with  
fingertips until mixture re-  
sembles breadcrumbs. Mix to  
a dry dough with water and

lemon juice. Turn on to  
floured board, knead slightly,  
roll to size and shape required  
with lightly floured rolling-  
pin.

Variations. — Rich Short-  
crust: Use butter instead of  
shortening and add 1 egg-yolk  
to the water. Use for special-  
occasion pastry cases.

Sweet Pastry: Add 1 table-  
spoon sugar and sift 1 table-  
spoon cornflour with the dry  
ingredients. Flavor with grated  
orange or lemon rind. Use  
for custard tarts, fruit pies,  
etc.

Cheese Pastry: Add 4 table-  
spoons grated dry cheese and  
a pinch of cayenne pepper.  
Use for any savory tart case  
or as a pie-cover.



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## HEAVEN KNOWS. MR. ALLISON

By  
*Charles Shaw*

**This is the first of a series of best-selling novels which we will publish every week for winter fireside reading.**

**"Heaven Knows, Mr. Allison" is the dramatic story of a nun and a soldier left behind by the tide of war on a remote Pacific island.**

*John Mills*



SOME time well into the night he became so weary that he had to will himself to clutch the handropes to prevent the mounting seas from washing him from the raft.

In that chaos there would be little chance of finding it again. He had long since been drenched by the spray, but there was little discomfort in that, water and wind being warm with the tropic warmth, except that the salt was stinging his eyelids. He kept his eyes closed for long periods.

Earlier, soon after the quick darkness came, there had been stars, some of them so bright that once or twice he thought a ship stood by until he remembered that no ships showed lights in these waters.

He had become aware of the approaching storm by the increasing movement of the stars; the strong, growing swell causing the raft to rise and sweep and dive so that, looking upward, he saw the stars wheeling and spinning across the sky.

The phosphorescence in the wake of the raft had become fainter, and with the coming of the wind and the black curtain that rushed over the stars it disappeared altogether and there was the pressing blackness and the raft's wild movement, the sound of the wind and himself pitching dizzily through it and keeping a grip on the ropes.

Now, with his burning eyes closed and the sea spray sweeping over him in showers, he felt himself weakening and had only the thought to hang on.

He knew that the raft was moving before the wind, yawing and veering as the seas made sport of it, but still moving in one general direction, though he had no idea what that direction was. But he was sure of the movement because most of the spume beating at him came from behind — he naturally thought of it as behind because he had hunched himself away from it and it was the realisation that he could hunch himself and so keep his front partly reasonably clear of the spray that convinced him of the raft's progress.

His weariness bothered him. He was alarmed to find that movements he made with his hands — attempts to change his grip, to wipe the spray from his head — became slowed and less certain, as though his limbs were partly numbed.

In his alarm he experimented with his legs, trying to lift one and then the other. Both were stiff and heavy, the movement sluggish and calling for the drive of his will power; nothing like the normal, automatic motion of muscle and tendon in obedience to will. Once, having tightened his grip with the right hand, he raised his left to clear the spray away, and fell over sideways, having to exert himself seriously to regain his balance. But this didn't alarm him as had the earlier manifestations of weakness.

He wasn't reasoning now. He was almost incapable of thought, simply crouching, almost inert, in the tumbling raft and hanging on as much by instinct as by will power. He felt cold creeping over him as the wind whipped his sodden clothing, and when the cold had spread along his back he wanted to sleep.

Broken dreams troubled him. He would find himself talking to somebody or shut in an elevator which kept on rushing up and down, and he'd start awake and there was the blackness and the wind crying and the waters sweeping him onward and presently he would doze and dream and start awake again.

Then the raft almost stood on its end and he came awake and cried out. It slapped back into the water and began to spin round. It made him dizzy, though he could not see. He could feel his stomach endeavouring to resist the circular movement, and he licked the salt crust on his lips and hurriedly spat, fighting off nausea.

## HEAVEN KNOWS, MR. ALLISON

By  
CHARLES SHAW

Then the raft seemed to baulk and pause and he felt something powerful push it and it moved and slid and then rolled over and threw him into the water so that he had to wrench his hands free of the ropes in order to obey the instinctive urge to strike out.

He felt his feet touch something solid, and next instant he was lost in a maelstrom of whirling, cutting sand and crushing, pounding water, so that his legs and arms went helplessly away from his body, tugged by a mighty force. Then they came back and he rolled over and was lying on sand, gasping, hearing the roar of the surf and patting the sand unbelievably with his hands.

Water came rushing out of the darkness and pushed him and half-rolled him, and he got up and stumbled away from it, going on upward until he felt his boots dragging in loose, dry sand. He went on through this as far as he was able, then he lay down and put his wet arms about his face and was still.

He awoke and looked at a blue sky without a cloud in it. He sat up, and a group of terns ran along the sand. He was on a strip of beach about a quarter-mile long.

One end of it was bounded by a low tumble of rocks which ran out from a densely wooded hillock. At the other end the trees went out in a point that seemed to stand in the water. Beyond the trees and running back towards him, a quarter-mile out, he saw a broken line of breakers and here and there the glistening points of a reef.

"Musta come in over that, some way," he muttered. He stood up, narrowing his eyes against the glare. His khaki shirt and pants were almost dry, though stiff with the sea salt. He removed his boots and tied them together, then took off his woolen socks and squeezed them and held one in each hand, with the boots across a shoulder by the tied laces. Barefooted and bareheaded, he went heavily up the beach towards the wall of jungle.

HE had almost reached it when a rhythmic murmur came down the sky. He turned quickly, narrowing his eyes and peering upward. A plane came sweeping in from the north-east. He leapt sideways into the shadow of some short, heavy-topped palms. Small and very fast, it swept in, turning to fly along the coast, and his face crinkled up as he saw the red ball under each wing. He watched the plane go away from him. Then he went a little deeper into the tangle of vines and scrub, hung his socks in the sun and sat down in the shade, knees drawn up, his arms locked about them, brooding.

When, having re clothed his feet, he was about to move into the bush, thought of the plane made him turn and scan the water between beach and reef, looking for the raft. It had disappeared. He turned again into the bush, making his way erratically up a low incline, alert for movement. Apart from the flash and chuckle of gaudy parakeets he saw and heard nothing.

He came upon a path running off at a tangent from his general direction. He paused, looking at the beaten trail, watching and listening. Some primal instinct caused him to turn upward, and he moved more freely now, but nonetheless watchful. The track veered suddenly and climbed more steeply, and suddenly he was still, looking upon a bungalow in a clearing.

He had come upon the back of the place. The track faded into the

clearing among vegetable beds and trellised vines. To the left was a group of small huts and to the right, close up against the bungalow, was what appeared to be a small office. A spade was stuck in the ground near the steps leading to the bungalow verandah and a broken cart lay to one side, groggily, on its only wheel. Some rag of clothing hung from the rail of the cart, and under the cart he could see a small pile of boxes and cans.

On the verandah an empty birdcage hung, and against the lintel of the back door he saw a boot and beside it a canvas deckchair. About the clearing and sheds and bungalow was the lost and forlorn air of desertion. He essayed a call.

"Hey!"

He heard it break on the silence like an eruption. He waited a minute or so, then gave a louder call.

Silence.

He could wait no longer. With a last quick glance behind, and his eyes darting everywhere, he ran to the verandah, up the steps, and then, receiving no challenge and feeling slightly foolish, he glowed down and walked easily to the rainwater tank which had been in his sight all the time.

After drinking he moved round the outside of the bungalow to the front and then, sure that he was alone, sat on the verandah edge and looked miserably at the scene before him. There were a flower garden and a low fence of stakes and beyond that a cleared slope which dropped swiftly to a deep bay. At the foot of the slope, by the bay, were sheds and one or two houses, and a short wharf ran out into the water. Half-way along it a small crane had been upended. There wasn't a craft of any kind on the water, none drawn up on the beach. He thought that probably there were some small boats sunk out there off the wharf. He sighed.

Whoever had lived and worked here had fled and the native workers had either fled with the whites or taken to the bush behind the bungalow. Well, there was nothing more to do just now, except to hunt up some food and take a rest. He went into the bungalow, going from room to room. Except for some old newspapers, printed in Dutch, which he couldn't understand, and odd bits of rubbish, the place had been stripped clean.

He came to the verandah again, and looked down at the houses and sheds about the wharf, prompted to go and explore, yet reluctant in a queer, rather frightening way. Then he laughed scornfully, flung down from the verandah, heading for the wharf, eyes busy and ears listening as before.

A half-hour later he was walking up the slope to the bungalow again. There had been nothing in the buildings save rubbish and, in the smallest of the three houses, a half-tin of crackers and a broken sheath knife, which he brought with him. He was near the bungalow when four rapid thuds echoed from out at sea, and he ran the remainder of the distance, and climbed to the verandah to peer out beyond the bay. Sea and sky were innocent of anything unusual. He felt overcome with weariness, so crawled under a tangle of riat vines and slept.

He woke in late afternoon, much refreshed, but hungry. He broke open a couple of green coconuts and drank their contents. From a ripe one he scraped the meat out with the broken knife, munching it with crackers from the tin. There were long shadows on the jungle, and he was somewhat scared, and haunted by the empty settlement.

Then he remembered the path which had led him to the clearing and decided to follow it back.

"Must lead somewhere," he reflected, aloud. He grimaced and added, "Hey, stop gabbing to yourself, soldier. Bad habit." He picked up his tin of biscuits and made for the track. It led him, by devious twists and turns, into deepening dusk and thicker bush.

He was beginning to doubt his wisdom in thus starting to follow a strange path with night so near when the path began to go upward and the bush thinned out a little. Then, almost as the daylight merged into the semi-gloom of the tropic night, the path dropped suddenly and he halted in silent astonishment.

Before him was a small river over which there ran a light foot-bridge made of sawn planks bound to bamboo stringers. Near the bridge, in a clearing and fronting garden beds outlined with coral and sea shells, was a tiny church built of thatched palm leaves, with a gabled roof of thatch, and at each corner a plain wooden cross. Two steps led up to the open door of the church, and on the lower of them, her head resting on arms crossed on her knees, in an attitude of terrible weariness, crouched a nun.

ABSTRACTEDLY swiping at mosquitoes, he stood there and watched the crouching figure in its dark, voluminous robes. Her beaudeuse was startlingly white against the background of the church wall and the black doorway. He watched her and he watched all about her, alert for anything, for he had been seven weeks with the others of his company, a fugitive in the Luzon jungles, and days after that crossing unknown seas and islands, and he had learned much woodcraft and the lore of the hunted.

When he was sure she was alone he moved down the incline, not speaking, all his senses alert against surprise. He was within fifty feet of her when she heard him and raised her head. He stopped. For an instant each of them peered at the other through the darkness, then she arose and spoke some word which he didn't understand, made as though to step towards him, and subsided suddenly into a heap of dark draperies on the ground.

He hesitated, looking about him, then hurried forward and spoke to her. Receiving no answer, he bent and gently pulled away from her face the obscuring head-dress. She lay inert, mouth slightly open. He could hear her breathing in quick, heavy pants, but it was too dark to see whether her eyes were open or not.

"You all right, ma'am?" he asked, and when there was no answer, he commented, "Huh. Fainted, I guess."

He stood erect, puzzled and with some sense of panic. He bent and peered closely at her again. Then, gently, but ready to draw his arms away in an instant, he lifted her up, astonished to find her so light, and, carrying her awkwardly, he went up the steps and through the open doorway of the church.

It was inky black in there and there was no sound save the hum of insects.

Just inside the door he put her easily to the floor and went out and down to the little river. When he got to the bank he cursed, for he had intended to take water to her and only now realised that he had nothing in which to carry it, not even a handkerchief to soak. He stood a moment, then spat from the side of his mouth, removed a boot,

filled it as thoroughly as he could, filled it with water and carried it back to the church. He moved with less care now, feeling safe in the darkness and more certain that no enemy lurked nearby.

When he stepped within the doorway, carrying the dripping boot carefully, she was gone. He looked about in the blackness, puzzled, then turned as a voice said, softly, "I am out here."

He turned about. She stood by the lower step, a blur in the tropic gloom.

"Oh," he said, moving down to her. "Sure had me beat, ma'am."

There was pleased surprise in the voice that replied, "You are Americans! When did you come? Is Father Juan with you? Did Sister Mercy get...?"

"Ma'am," he interrupted, emptying the boot and shuffling his foot back into its clamminess, "I'm American. But there ain't nobody but me."

There was a silence while she absorbed this.

"Then—then—but how did you get here? How are you alone?"

Before he could answer a pulsing drone surged out of the northern sky, grew louder, passed above them, and died away to the south. Both of them stood, their faces skyward, in attitudes of strained attention. The sound reminded him of the immediate past and the pressing present. There was menace in that invisible flight above their heads, just as there was menace in the deserted settlement, the sound of guns at sea, the empty church, and the solitary nun.

"Ma'am," he said, stepping back a little way and peering down at her hidden face. "I'm a United States Marine. I was thru ashore here this morning. I—well, there was only me. I wanta rest badly, ma'am, but I gotta know if it's safe to rest here?"

She appeared to be thinking. He waited. Had she been an ordinary woman he would have assumed command of the situation, but a woman in holy orders was a great mystery to him. He felt that he couldn't order her about or assert any kind of authority. She carried the majesty of learning and secret things with her and, though he hadn't shown it, he was rather awed.

"Yes," she said. "It is safe so far as I know. I was expecting someone when you came. I must wait for them here. They will come soon, I am sure. Yes, you may rest in the church there."

"But what about you, ma'am? Will you—?"

"Pray have no fears for me. I shall not be far away. I am not in danger of any kind."

That puzzled him. He knew the words had a deeper significance than had they been uttered by any other kind of woman, but he pondered when he tried to discover that significance. That she used the term "danger" as meaning something beyond mere physical hurt or captivity or even death itself, he was dimly aware, as he was also dimly aware that her meaning had to do with her mystery, the holy places wherein she moved, the realms which, to him, were not for ordinary people and United States Marines. There was nothing for him to say or do.

"Well," he said hesitantly, "guess I'll lie down in here somewhere."

"Good night," she said softly, and added, "God keep you."

"Thanks, ma'am," he returned, in rather embarrassed astonishment. He turned through the doorway into the black interior of the church and stretched out in a corner, one arm under his head. For a while he lay, staring into the darkness, pondering many things. He muttered, "For cryin' out loud," and presently he slept.

He awoke to the grey of morning, in the midst of a sticky heat, and with the roar of rain on the thatched roof. He got up and went to the door and peered into the downpour, having remembered the nun. It was impossible to see more than a few feet through the deluge. He turned away from it, inward to the building, and saw her at the other end of the church, before a tiny altar on which stood a small brass crucifix.



In her shapeless black habit she was huddled either in sleep or in prayer.

He lowered himself to the floor and sat just within the doorway and looked at the rain.

Presently he heard her stirring and he got to his feet as she came towards him. There was more light now and he looked upon the face framed in the white cap and was astonished to see one so young.

Her cheeks had a pallor on them, though whether of dawn-light or hardship he could not say. Her nose was short and straight, her mouth small and softened by a half-smile. She had dark-fringed, rather childish grey eyes, full of candor. There were faint shadows under the eyes, and in the eyes themselves a suggestion of strain. The look she gave him was a strange mixture of pleasure and impersonal curiosity.

"Good morning," she said, and looked beyond him to the rain.

"Mornin', ma'am," he returned. "Say, I got some biscuits and a coconut. It ain't my notion of breakfast, but it's about all there is till that stops." He nodded at the rain.

"Thank you." He hacked at the coconut with the broken knife and shook the shreds into her cupped hands. She piled the coconut delicately into one hand and took a biscuit in the other. They ate slowly and silently, absorbed in their own thoughts. He thought he ought to speak to her, but he didn't know what to say. A nun was something outside his previous experience.

She brought a small brass bowl from the altar and caught rain-water in it and offered him the drink. The humidity made movement irksome. He had resumed his seat by the wall, wiping his face and watching the rain.

"Be cooler to go out there and get soaked," he remarked for want of something better to say.

"No," she said, quite sternly. "That's how people get fever."

Some part of their reserve fell away.

"I'm Hank Allison," he said. "Marines, like I said. We got shipped to them Philippines not thinkin' we was goin' to be in a war right soon. After Tojo hit us we was fightin' around and—and—well, I guess I finished up here—." His voice trailed into vagueness.

"Don't talk if it troubles you," she said gently.

The little touch of sympathy encouraged him.

"It don't trouble me, ma'am. Reckon it does me good. I ain't so good at recollectin' things as they come. We got back to Bataan, all right, all right. But it ain't no picnic. There was word about some Americans, with women and kids, down south of us somewhere—Bulayan was the name, I think." He paused frowning, obviously trying to remember things in their correct order. "We was fifteen men; Captain Hollis, two sergeants, two corporals, ten privates. We had three Filipino scouts. We—well, we never found nobody. When we turned back the Japs was behind us, between us and home. We was hidin' and runnin' and hidin' for days. Tryin' to get back." He broke off and sighed, staring at the rain, his mouth grim.

"Do not talk if you—" she began.

"Aw, I'm all right," he declared, shrugging his shoulders in the gesture of rejecting an imputation. "Guess it's hard to remember everything, that's all. We come down to the coast one night. It wasn't what we wanted because it was safer back in the brush. There was only six of us left—the Captain and Sergeant Hein and Pollet and big Jones and me and little Pedrana, the Filipino. We was bumbin' round in the dark and we come spand on to a big motor-boat—nobody on her—just tied up and left there. Sort of a rescue craft. She had a couple o' rafts, food and water in her lockers, and a machine-gun mounted forward. There was a belt in the gun. The Captain set a watch on shore and we got aboard and I looked her engines over. I was a motor engineer, in Cincinnati, before I went to California and joined the Marines. Her

engines was sweet. She stunk of Japs but she was American built and the Captain he tore the Tojo flag off her stern pole and chucked it in the drink. 'Can you run her, Hank?' he says to me. 'Sure, sir,' I says. 'Then let's get the hell out o' here,' he says and calls in the watch.

"We shove her off and let her drift in the dark with dead engines till we reckon we're way off shore and then I give her the gun. Boy, she sure had power." He paused, thinking of that power.

"It's so dark we can't see a thing and we'd of rammed a ship that was dead ahead of me she blinked at us. We sheer off smart and don't answer and she blinks again and then turns a searchlight on us. The Captain swings us away from them and yells for speed and I hit her with everything she's got and we go out o' there at round forty knots. But that Jap must have been a destroyer. She throws more light and opens up with four-inch—anyway that's what they looked like when they hit the water ahead of us on our port beam. It looks like curlicues for us because that Jap keeps his lights on us and gets to some smart shootin'. But right then the rain comes. It hits us like a flood and we lose the light and run through the rain south-west. Boy, could that baby run. They're shootin' way off in the dark and later a couple o' planes is buzzin' over us in the rain and droppin' flares. But that rain is like a blanket and pretty soon we got the sea to ourselves."

REACHING out with the brass bowl, he held it until it filled, and took a long drink.

"Well, we kept her on a south-west course till it started to come day and we could see land through the rain, off to starboard. We prowled in, but there's nothing but trees and we find a little bay and pull in there and pull trees over the boat and lay there all day. The Captain goes to work on her charts and dopes it out we're somewhere on the top end of Palawan, so we plan it we'll head south and get across the Sula Sea to Java or one of them Dutch places or maybe Australia. The Captain says maybe we might bump the U.S. Navy and that gets Pollet to wonderin' if there's any U.S. Navy—you see, ma'am, we had no way of knowin'." He looked at her, hoping she could give him news.

She shook her head.

"I don't know," she replied sadly. "I've had no way of knowin', either, Mr. Allison."

He turned his head away and stared out at the rain, silent, his head full of unconnected thoughts, with a feeling that he was lost. He sighed, and crinkled up his eyes as he swore at the downpour. Then he recollected himself and, at once turned to her, saying, "I'm right sorry, ma'am, for doin' that. Guess I forgot there was a lady here."

"Thank you," she said. Her smile was something soft and sweet in a hard world. "What happened after that?"

"First we lost little Pedrana. He went off durin' the day, sayin' he'd take a look round. But he never come back—leastways he wasn't back by night. We waited awhile and then the Captain says to shove off, because there's no knowin' what happened. We run mostly south-west by west that night. There was some land about and we nearly grounded twice, and when dawn come we was a mile late makin' a hide-out. We'd hardly got under cover—we was up a creek—when a Jap plane come circlin' round. Maybe he was lookin' for us, maybe not. He went off and nothin' else happened that day. Captain Hollis was some anxious about our gas—we was keepin' her right up to it and we'd been runnin' two nights—and he said to keep on half-throttle that night.

"We turned south, reckonin' on gettin' round the bottom of Borneo. A storm come up about ten o'clock and thinkin' about the gas I went forward and took the wheel and the Captain went down to look over the engines. Right there we hit some-

thin', or somethin' hit us—I dunno. I see an almighty flash, but I didn't hear nothin' because I'm in the drink with my ears ringin' like a mule kicked my head. I come up and started to yell. The sea was runnin' under a big wind and I couldn't see a thing. It wasn't cold in the water, but the dark was sittin' down tight and I'm goin' up and down in the seas like a cork. All of a sudden I says to myself, 'Hank Allison, you're a dead duck,' and right there the raft bumps me and I grab it quick and get into it. After that I just hung on and was sick. I got awful tired and about when I was all in a big wave spins me off of her and my boots hit the sand and here I am."

He took another drink from the bowl, wiped the sweat from his face, and stared a moment at the rain. Then he turned and grinned at her through his young beard.

The nun leaned forward, resting her face in her hands, looking down at the floor. He heard her murmuring to herself, and believing that she prayed, was embarrassed. He would have arisen, but that she raised her head and asked, "When did you come?"

"Yesterday mornin'."

"And you haven't seen anyone else but me?"

"Nope. There's a house and a wharf and sheds over there"—he waved a hand in the direction of the deserted place—"but there ain't a livin' soul. Evacuated, I guess, or maybe taken by the Japs. Maybe the Japs wasn't there, because there wasn't any bombin' or burnin', only a crane tipped over. I looked it over. Then I followed a trail down here; that's all. Nope, I don't guess there's anybody around, ma'am."

She said, a small smile on her lips, though her face had fallen into weariness, "God has His own way of doing things, Mr. Allison. He sent you here to help me."

Allison was astonished by this remark, delivered with an air of absolute conviction. It hadn't occurred to him that she should need help. She had appeared to be mistress of her own situation. For him, a United States Marine far from his company, disarmed and alone and probably within the enemy's lines, with no way of escape in view, there was not much hope save in a miracle, and he knew it. Since he had little faith in miracles, about all he could do was keep himself alive and keep clear of the enemy as long as he could. Beyond that was only vagueness, and he refused to speculate about it.

The nun's simple statement shook him out of this mental lethargy. It was less simple now. Instead of one U.S. Marine in a desperate plight it was one U.S. Marine and one nun.

With an ordinary girl or woman he would have been less confused. He'd have simply taken charge of her and set out to do what he could for both. But the nun represented a great mystery. He didn't know what to make of her. He had always regarded nuns as delicate creatures, cut off from the world and its crudities, strange and mysterious beings who lived secluded lives in secret and holy places into which the every-day clamor of life never penetrated. Yet here was one of them in the midst of war and flight and danger; alone and unattended and apparently convinced that he, Private Henry Allison, U.S. Marine, had been brought by a Divine Hand past enemy ranks and wild seas and cast up here for no other purpose but to help her.

"Pshaw!" muttered Private Henry Allison, torn between apprehension, disbelief, and disgust. He crinkled up his eyes, studying her, and was about to spit, but quickly checked himself.

He arose and leaned against the door post, his hands behind him, and looked down at her.

"You, ma'am," he said. "You—I—I never thought to meet up with anybody like you here."

"I was in Singapore," she said. "I am—that is, I belong to an Order known as the Ursulines. We are teachers and we work among the poor and ill. There were five of us.

We were going to China. They stopped us in Singapore when the war began. We waited there some weeks and then we were put into a ship with a lot of other people—refugees. The ship was very crowded. There were many women and children; many races. On the second day out aeroplanes came and dropped bombs on the ship"—she shuddered—"it was dreadful, horrible. The ship caught fire. The officers put us in a boat with some women and children, and men to row it. The ship blew up just as our boat got away from it. It was in the evening. The men rowed all night. We had no water—or only a little water, I'm not sure—and the men began to fight and there was a lot of screaming, they threw two men into the sea."

She dropped her head into her hands and sobbed, but quickly recovered and continued.

"Some time after that it rained and we caught some water. Nobody knew which way to go. A day and a night and another day passed, and after that I don't remember very clearly, except that some of the poor children died and some of the people jumped into the sea. The boat was very bad. One night the boat ran on to land and those who were left got ashore. There was water and we drank much. It made us sick. We were better afterwards and slept. In the morning some natives found us and they went and brought Father Juan to us. There was only one man left alive, and five women and six children, and Sister Mercy and myself. I am Sister Angela. Father Juan took us to a village. It's not far from here—at least, it wasn't far from here—and we had food and rested."

"But the next day aeroplanes came and dropped bombs. Some of the people were killed and—and—knocked about. The aeroplanes kept on bombing and we ran off into the bush and waited. Then they went away. Then we came out, but all the natives except three had run away. The village was destroyed, so Father Juan brought us here, to this church. I stayed here with the three natives and some of the people from the ship. We were to wait while Father Juan and Sister Mercy and some others went to—a place called Salambang, I think, for help. I went to sleep that night, and in the morning I was alone. I don't know where the people went or what became of the Father and Sister Mercy. I was waiting for them to come back when you came."

Allison waited to see if she had more to tell him. There was nothing he could say. All through the fighting in the Philippines he had heard this sort of thing. People left alone while others vanished; people waiting for friends or help which never came.

THERE was nothing to be said. He had lived with death for many weeks and walked arm in arm with disaster and loss. These things happened. They'd become part of the pattern of life. He was the only survivor of a detachment of Marines, she the only one of a boatload of people. There were few words when such people met, merely a brief recounting of their particular disaster. Sympathy was none the less sincere for being silent, nor was understanding dead because it stood by while emotions were brought under control.

Presently he asked, "This Father Juan? Didn't he leave any orders or—?"

Sister Angela smiled wanly. "He is a Spaniard. He speaks only Spanish and Dutch and Tamil; that's a native language. We are Canadians—Sister Mercy and I. I'm from Alberta. We know only English and a little Latin. We had to do everything with signs and a few little words."

"Ain't you seen anybody since?"

"Nobody. Until you came."

"Looks like we're stuck here."

"I know."

They fell silent again, staring out at the steadily falling rain.

In the days that followed the

Marine and the nun went through a period of adjustment, both to each other and to their environment and situation. Both were young and healthy and in each was a quality of adaptability that had lain latent until this adventure called it forth.

To Sister Angela, of course, the fact that Allison was a man meant nothing. Her vows and training, her years of discipline, her faith, the high ideals which she served, placed her above and beyond the things of the earth.

To Allison she was sexless in the sense that she was beyond her sex. She was more than unattainable—she was outside the boundaries of speculation. He watched her at her devotions, standing with bowed head in deference to her and sometimes kneeling, according as the impulse moved him.

Their island was well watered, rather too much so, as it was in the tropic rain belt. With the wet came pests. Mosquitoes and gnats, and a small, stinging fly that came out in myriads. Leeches not only clung to them when they brushed through the long grass and heavy undergrowth, but came looping in search of them across the oozy ground.

There was food of a kind. Bananas and sugar-cane, melons and mangoes, and cucumbers in the settlement garden and now running wild from it.

Animal and bird life abounded. Allison would have tried to bring down wild pig or deer, or pigeons or partridge, but he had no means of making fire, which was why they made no effort to catch fish. But it was a red letter day for them when Allison discovered a wild bees' nest and, at the cost of a sting or two, gathered a feast of dripping comb.

They discovered the island to be about three miles by one, running roughly north and south, with several rather steep hills in its north-west corner.

Sister Angela accompanied Allison in all the early exploration, not because she was particularly interested in the topography of the place or because she was scared of being alone. They had not seen their enemy, but they had heard high-flying aircraft.

Above the western gulf was what was left of the village to which Sister Angela and her fellow survivors had come from the bombed ship. The Japanese airmen had thoroughly destroyed it. Allison searched the ruins and there was nothing save useless debris and decomposing bodies. The absence of anything in the way of foodstuffs, clothing, domestic pets (he knew these natives must have kept fowls) or domestic implements convinced him that somebody had returned there after the flight of Father Juan and his company, gathered up everything worth gathering, and fled, probably by sea.

Sister Angela called to him and he turned quickly. She was beckoning urgently and pointing high to the north. He heard the pulsing drone of engines and he sprouted towards her and the cover of the brush. There, still and silent, they watched several squadrons of aircraft pass over towards the south, unable to identify them but convinced that they were Japanese.

About a week afterwards, he had left Sister Angela in the church and gone alone the little river to bathe. He was in the water and had to freeze there as first one and then two twin-engined planes swept in low over the trees. When they passed he leapt from the water into the bush and hastily crossed, the planes came back and cruised back and forth. When they headed north-east and didn't return he went to the church. On the way he stopped, looked up at the sky, listened, then spat sideways and muttered, "Lookin' the place over, huh!"

Sister Angela's eyes were big with question.

"Japs, all right," he said. "I don't like it. They was lookin' for some-



thin, blast their eyes." He sat down, thoughtful and worried, a little scared, alert for any sound from the sky. Sister Angela came down the steps and sat beside him. In a subdued voice she asked, "What do you suppose it means?"

"Them comin' over here? Could mean anythin'. Far as we're concerned it means I'm a dumb cluck. I ought to know better." He shook his head in self-deprecation. "Look, Sister, we can't stay here. Any Japs come to this island, they'll search it, see. They find this church and they see where somebody's been livin' in it; what they do is go over the island inch by inch. Once they got wind there's somebody here we wouldn't have a chance. Yes, sir, they'd prod every foot, knowin' we was somewhere. Sister, we gotta go live up in them hills somewhere; make us some fox-holes up there in the brush an' kill any sign that shows we ever was in this church. It won't be so good, Sister, but it gives us a chance."

"But won't they search the island, just the same, when they come? Whether they think there is somebody here or not? Even if we make the church look—"

"Ain't no tellin' what they'll do. Mind you, if they come to stay, put a garrison ashore, we'll be out of luck. But if they only put a party ashore to look it over, an' they don't find no sign, an' maybe don't reckon a two-by-four-island like this is worth garrisonin', well maybe we could last out. It's only a hope, Sister, but it's all we got to build on."

"I see. I'll do what you want if it's best."

"I can't tell if it's best. It's a chance, that's all, but we gotta grab every chance. We ain't likely to get many."

And with this grim prophecy he arose and said, "Let's go."

As she followed him over the bamboo bridge and up the slope into the jungle, Sister Angela was aware of a new tautness about him. He walked so fast that she, encumbered with her habit, had trouble to keep up with him. She didn't complain, merely hurried on, affected by his obvious conviction that there was need for haste, and feeling a growing tension in her own nerves.

When they were far up the side of one of the foothills running down from the steeper hills of the north-west he began to twist and turn this way and that, casting about like a hound. Then, on a little flat place heavy with grass but comparatively free of brush, he paused and looked about him.

Sister Angela was too exhausted to question him: she sought the shade of a pandanus that grew a little apart, and she sat down with her back to its bole, drawing her voluminous skirts tightly about her boots to ward off creeping things.

Allison fingered his brown beard thoughtfully, then said, "Wait," and plunged into the brush. She heard him moving. After a brief while he reappeared.

"I guess this'll do," he said. "We'll take a chance on the church to-night an' move up here first thing in the morning. I got no tools, but I guess I can rig some kind of shelter."

Sister Angela looked about her at the forbidding lonely place, and there came a momentary breaking of her courage. Poor though the shelter of the church in their desperate situation, it had been for her a link with familiar things and a refuge for her spirit. She had somehow come to believe that it was the last stronghold for her and that, while it was there and she a part of it, she was safe.

Now, looking about at this strange and heavy bush, and realising that she was to live in it, was almost too much. She could not, at that moment, convince herself that God and the holy angels were as powerful in her behalf out on this lonely hillside as inside a church of thatch. She could not stay the tears, and she turned away from Allison and

bowed her head in her hands, weeping, incapable of prayer or of any emotion save that of awful loneliness.

Allison stood above her in a distress almost as great, unable to comfort her with touch or word because he knew instinctively that neither would do.

He looked out through the trees to the sea, his heart heavy with a sense of despair. He brooded thus until she had composed herself, and then he turned to her and asked, hesitatingly, "Sister, is it too much for you? It would maybe be better if you let them take you. Maybe that wouldn't be bad. They would—they ought to—respect you. Maybe it would be better?"

She dabbed at her eyes with the hem of her robe, looked gravely at him, and asked, "What would you do? If they took me, what would you do?"

He laughed, though without mirth. "Me! Aw, I ain't nobody. It's different with me, I reckon I'd keep clear of 'em as long as I could. Maybe it wouldn't be for long, at that, but—well, I guess I'd make out. But it's not for you, this livin' up here in the bush. A woman an' you bein' a nun an'—an'— He floundered into silence.

"I will stay with you," she said, in a firm, small voice. "Forgive me for being foolish. Perhaps I am tired." She arose. "Let us go back, please."

He made no move, but continued to stand, frowning thoughtfully at the distant sea. Then he brought his gaze to her and said, "I'm worried about them three planes. They was on reco. They sure saw the church and the buildin's on the bay."

"Guess the church ain't safe no more, Sister," he went on. "Not from the minute they sighted it. I want you should stay here. I'm goin' down and cover up our signs. I'll be right back. You stay right here." His tone was full of command. Before she could protest he had swung away down the hill.

She sat in the shade, fingering her rosary, murmuring to herself.

She was drowsy with the heat and her weariness, and Allison's return caused her to start awake. He carried the now empty biscuit tin, two of the brass altar bowls, the small roll of cot matting from in front of the altar, some odds and ends of string and rope he had found. These he placed on the ground beside her and stretched himself out for a brief rest.

**A** HALF-HOUR later, again commanding her to wait, he went down to the settlement by the bay. There, working hurriedly, with only his broken knife for a tool, he ripped empty cases apart and carried the boards a little way into the jungle. Presently he added some empty cans, spokes from the broken cartwheels, the canvas from the deckchair, all the old paper and rag he could find. It appeared to be a heap of useless junk, but his manner was intent and his eyes held the gleam of one who envisions plans.

He took the spade, climbed to the verandah roof, and used it to force apart and lever from their joists several sheets of galvanised iron. These he added to the heap in the jungle. Then, satisfied that the heap was hidden from casual observation, and inexpressibly weary, he returned to the nun.

Without a word he slid to the ground and almost at once fell into a sleep of exhaustion. The nun watched him awhile, with concern in her eyes, then she took one of the bowls and went down to the little river. She laved her face and wrists, drank, filled the bowl and carried it back to the sleeping Marine. She waited beside him as the brief tropic twilight deepened into night.

He awakened and sat up. The surrounding bush was a black wall, out of which came cries and small shrieks and occasionally a deep grunt. Sister Angela handed Allison the bowl and he drained it. He

sighed, then said slowly, "This here vegetarian diet slows a man. What I'd give for a rare steak!"

"What were you doing? You were away so long."

"I sure was busy. Wanted to get them things in case the Japs come. Sister, if we got to live up here we got to have a shelter an'—"

He broke off and sprang erect, his head up, his hand signalling for silence. Just as she heard the first swelling murmur of engines he shouted, "I knew it! I knew it! Here they come!"

They stood side by side in silence, heads raised, listening to the increasing roar racing down on them from the north-east. Then it was over them and around them, so that they could feel the vibrations of it. Allison grunted at a brilliant white light burst high in the night and slowly drifted down. Somewhere above the light, in the midst of the roaring darkness above it, a high-pitched screaming began. It seemed to rush towards them and they ducked involuntarily. Then the valley of the little church erupted in red and green mushrooms and fans and rings of fire, and the roar and blast of bombs rushed up the hill and struck them, causing them to stagger a little.

While this was going on more flares burst away to their left, over the settlement on the bay, and they saw the brilliant flashes and heard the roar of bombs as a background to the nearer uproar.

The blind, implacable fury of it aroused a fury in Allison. He beat the air with his hands as though he would reach up to the enemy planes and swore violently.

Then he shut his mouth like a trap and stood, silent and rigid, all the time the flares and bombs were falling. When it stopped and there were only the glow of fires down in the valley and over by the bay, and the diminishing drone of the bombers, he leaned against a tree wearily and said, "I'm sure sorry, Sister. I wouldn't want you to hear me swearing. Not you. Guess I forgot."

She said, a touch of hysteria in her voice, "It doesn't matter. Doesn't matter at all." She had the rosary in her fingers and tears were running down her cheeks, but he couldn't see them.

The Marine and the nun, partly dazed and feeling the deadly weakness of reaction, stood on shaky legs, not knowing quite what to do. It was as though their will had been shocked out of them. Both of them were conscious of the frightening inference behind the bombing, the inference that they were not unknown to the enemy.

Allison heard his companion murmuring.

"What did you say?"

"I am praying."

"Pray harder," he said, a little brutal because he thought praying was a silly thing to do. "They'll be back. They'll sure be back."

They came back twice more that night, the last time in greater force and with heavier bombs.

He believed the Japanese would make a landing the next morning, and he took the nun deep into the jungle and hid her while he went at dawn to watch for them. But nothing disturbed the serenity of sea and sky that morning. When the day was well on he decided they weren't coming, and went back to the nun.

"Maybe they got other business," he said. "Maybe they'll come tomorrow. We got to work fast."

They went down to the bay and looked at what was left of the settlement. The wharf had been badly plastered and was still burning. The bungalow had a hole in one wall but had escaped other damage. Of the sheds little remained but smashed and burning timbers. There were flame-blackened gardens and in the space of the clearing itself Allison eyed the burning timber, crinkling up his eyes.

"If we could keep a fire going," he said, "maybe I could knock over a

squirrel or something"—he let the words die. Both of them felt in their mouths the remembered taste of cooked meat.

He posted the nun on the hillside, where she could watch sea and sky, gave her orders to watch and listen, and himself began the carriage of the iron and boards, the cans, the spade, and the rest of the junk up the hill to the spot he had selected.

By late afternoon he had carried the material to the hill crest. He rested awhile, then leaving the nun to wait, he went into the jungle with the idea of killing a bird or animal and roasting it on the bomb fires. At dusk he returned, empty handed and ruefully irritated, and talked of making a bow and arrows, a slingshot, or some kind of trap. They ate a mess of coconut meat and banana.

He said, "Guess I'll make us a dug-out to-morrow. It's too dark now. It's sleep in the open again, Sister."

She was silent. From where he sat with his back to a tree he peered through the gloom at the dim whiteness of her head-dress. He thought she was engaged in prayer, and he held his tongue.

**S**OMEWHERE in the valley an animal grunted, there were mixed nearer noises in the brush on the hillside, and beyond was the murmur of the sea. Sounds were undefinable, but all round them was a vague, restless mutter. Up here leeches and mosquitoes did not trouble them, but there were other unseen crawling and flying things whose touch was unpleasant and occasionally caused them to start and frantically brush at neck or face.

Too tired for thinking, Allison was almost asleep when he felt the nun lowering herself beside him.

"You must be tired," she said. "Yup. Guess so." He yawned and added, "Seems to me the Japs ought to have been here to-day. Wonder what stopped 'em?"

She recognised it as idle speculation and didn't trouble to answer, saying instead, and rather wistfully, "It is so peaceful, here in the night. It doesn't seem possible that we're cut off and so far away."

Allison hardly heard her. A wild, unbidden, exciting thought had leapt through his mind. He felt a stirring in his blood, the back of his throat became dry, he could feel the pounding of his heart. There was heat and the mounting excitement and the thought growing and growing—they were alone together in the darkness, nobody within miles and miles, nobody to see or know save themselves—and she was a woman and young.

He blew out his breath in a shock of realisation, and scrambled hurriedly to his feet, forcing his mind away from the thought, horrified by it because she was a nun, yet tempted to wonder—to wonder He leaned against the tree, fighting himself, and striving for calmness.

"What is it?" she asked, in some alarm, standing up, her head on one side, listening.

Her complete personal remoteness steadied him.

"Nothing, I guess," he said, with a deprecatory little laugh. "Touch of the heebies, mebbe. Nothing at all."

To reassure her he sat down.

"I wonder," she said, resuming her position beside him. "I wonder how long this will go on? Living like this, I mean. We're out of touch—cut off. We don't know"—her voice fell to a lower note—"Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with Thee"—and at the end of the World. Amen! She bowed her head and her words fell to a murmur, so that he could not distinguish them. He sat there listening, and felt a strange, soothing influence on his disturbed spirit.

The night was still all about them, and silent save for the sounds of small things in the brush. Then a beast cried somewhere in the bomb-torn valley and immediately there

was a greater hush. Allison found himself listening to the hush, and was conscious of relief all along his nerves when the beast cried again, farther away. After that the little sounds began again.

He arose and went to his pile of junk and rooted in it until he'd gathered most of the paper together in a heap.

He called Sister Angela to him and showed her the heap and said, "There. You lie there, Sister. I'll be around."

"Thank you," she replied.

He stepped away until she was beyond his sight in the close darkness, then he sat down again, back to a tree.

He heard her movements for a time, then she was still. His thoughts wandered and he felt the tiredness of his limbs like a drug. Presently he slept.

In the morning he left her still sleeping and went down to the little river to bathe. He laved himself and frolicked in the water, then dried himself in the sun. Glad, he went among the still smouldering remnants of the church. A part of the flooring and palm thatch had been blown together. It was damp on top, but a sullen smoke came from somewhere in the heart of the mass. He searched out dry splinters and stuff, rooted down to the fire and encouraged it. The blasted trunk of a mahogany lay among scorched and dried tangles of fern and liana on a sodden crater lip. He kicked the dried stuff together against the log, and with forked sticks carried fire to it.

When the flame grew he carried bits of flooring and dead palm thatch and fed it, though with an anxious eye on the pillar of smoke that climbed out of the valley. He hoped that the mahogany would take fire so that he could keep it burning, and in his mouth was the taste of roast pig and pigeon and fish.

His beard no longer irritated him, having grown quickly. He put a hand to it as he watched the fire, and ran the hand over the long hair on his head, wondering what he looked like. He watched the fire until satisfied that it would hold, then went up the hill, Sister Angela sat on her heap of papers. He saw anxiously disappear from her face as he appeared. She held her hands clasped in front of her, smiling at him inquiringly, because she could see he had something to tell her.

"I got a fire," he called. "But I got nothin' to cook on it yet. Them Japs sure threw everything they had at the little old church." He spread his hands expressively. "It just ain't," he added.

She turned away from him at that and looked across the jungle. He saw her lips quiver and her hands clasping each other in a nervous, supplicating movement. She sighed and parted her hands and put one of them to her face as though she were lost and afraid. She seemed so small and child-like, standing there in the midst of the wilderness, far from the cloisters and the stained glass and the chapel bell at evening, far from hope of rescue, so isolated and strange and alone that Allison's heart ached for her, and he stepped forward and put an arm across her shoulders and said, with a break of tenderness in his voice, "Oh, Sister, I'll look after you. I'll watch out for you."

"I know," she murmured, without raising her head. "I know. I'm very foolish. It—it didn't seem so bad while the church was there. Now, you see, there is nowhere—I have nowhere—for a moment it seemed I was cast out. It isn't so, oh, it isn't so. It was only my weakness. How weak we are. This isn't anything; this time we are in isn't anything. We go where we are sent, without question. How silly of me to give way. Thank you, Mr. Allison, I know you will. I am quite all right."

He dropped his arm and stood back. He didn't understand her words, but he had felt the strength flowing through her under his arm, and he was glad. Her uplift of spirit inspired his own spirit.

"Let's eat some more of this here



vegetation," he said cheerfully. "I gotta lot of work to do."

Almost on the crest of the hill, deep in a tangle of napa palm and banana, with ferns and pitcher plants on the ground and hibiscus here and there, he had marked a low, very thickly foliaged bush.

It was something like a blackberry, with but one stem and it spread from the stem over a diameter of some eight or ten feet, as low to the ground that only a hand could get beneath it, rising to perhaps three feet in height, the whole bush a densely packed mass of leaves and small thorns.

Close beside it, where the black soil was easy to dig, Allison sunk a hole about five feet deep, then drove under the bush, scooping out the soft marl with the spade, propping the bush where necessary and banking the scooped-out earth, until he'd made a dug-out roughly seven feet long, about four feet wide, and five feet deep. On the opposite side of the bush he repeated the performance. The two dugouts were separated by a wall about four feet thick.

He floored the holes with boards from the packing-cases, wadding them tightly with short stakes driven in with the flat of the spade. The sides he lined with corrugated iron, chopping and bending it with the spade to suit his needs. On the surface of the ground, under the overhang of the bush, he built a barricade of sods, and slid sheets of iron over them to form a rough roof, staying the iron underneath with light logs broken green from the jungle, and packing sods on top of them.

He made trips to the ruined settlement for more odds and ends of iron and timber. When he had finished, and had disguised the entrances with sods and ferns, anyone could have passed ten feet away and not discovered them, unless aware of their locality and closely searching for them. This work occupied five days. Thrice in that time they had eaten boiled fish, for he had made a spear after discovering that at high tide bream and a red cod-like fish came into the rock pool on the west side of the island. They came in such numbers that it was easy to spear them in the clear water.

All through the building of the dugouts Sister Angela had kept a watch on sea and sky, for Allison was ever alert for the enemy. She cooked the fish in her brass bowls after cleaning them with the broken knife. She took them down to the burning mahogany in the valley and boiled them, and while she was away Allison stopped work and took up the watch on sky and sea. The fish were relished for all that they needed salt. Savoring them, Allison played with ideas for bringing down other game.

When the first dugout was ready, Allison led Sister Angela to it, showed her how to slip down through the disguising cover, and followed her. This hole was on the west side of the bush, the other on the south-east. There was scarcely room for the two of them in the hole, but Allison was proud of his achievement and glowed when the nun displayed her appreciation.

"It'll get wet when the rains start," he warned her. "Ain't no way to keep water out. I dug a sump there and mebbe you can bale her enough to keep her dry."

"It's grand," she murmured. It was little more than a hole in the ground, but it was shelter.

"It's yours," he said, looking it over in the dim light, trying to think of means of improving it. "Guess I'll leave you to fix it for yourself. I'll go cut ferns and stuff to lie on."

Two days later he caught a half-grown pig in a trap-fall near the little river and, after a rough-and-ready and somewhat bloody butchering, they ate meat for the first time since coming to the island.

They ate as much of it as they could, for there was no way of keeping fresh meat in that tropical climate.

Allison, remembering what he'd read of jerked beef, tried roasting and drying the pork, but made a failure of it. What didn't sizzle and curl in the heat of the fire quickly went putrid in the heat of the sun. Far from discouraged, he dug more trap-falls and planned means of catching birds.

The days slipped by. Their hair grew longer and their clothing faded in the sun. One afternoon Japanese aircraft flew over them on some mission which took them on a direct line into the south. Two days after that a reconnaissance flight came over and detached four planes which flew criss-cross patterns over the island for some time, then departed into the north-east. A night after that they heard the passage of aircraft over the north-east corner of the island. They had no doubt that they were Japanese.

After she had worked for two days on her dug-out—work could be done only by day because they had no lights—Sister Angela invited Allison to see it. From short logs he had brought from the jungle she had formed a frame, filling it with fern and palm fronds to make a sleeping place. He had driven forked sticks into the floor and made a low, crude table of roughly piled and thatched napa leaves.

THE dim hole had already acquired a personality. Crude and cramped though it was, it was being lived in and it had taken on the warm, intimate air of a human habitation. Allison noted a small, square hole just below the roof in the rear wall and he looked inquiringly at it.

She laughed a little. "It's my chapel," she said softly. "You may look at it."

Touched, he stepped closer to it. In the cavity her rosary and crucifix lay among some leaves and flowers. As he looked at them, something of the pathos of the nun's situation stirred him. He wanted to say something to her, something of help and encouragement, but he couldn't find the words. Instead, a thought came to him. Avoiding her eyes he murmured, "Guess I just remembered something. I'll be right back." And he pushed his way out of the dug-out, leaving her in some bewilderment.

Allison went down into the valley and searched among the ashes and debris of the ruined church, over which the urgent tropic growth was already spreading. He had recalled seeing a wrought-iron cross there, bent by explosion. It had probably come from the gable of the church. He found it, took it to the still burning log, heated it, and beat the upright and arms as straight as he could, using a billet of wood. It was about a foot long. He cooled it in the river, then carried it back to the dugouts. Sister Angela was waiting him, standing in the open, and he handed her the cross somewhat shyly. The expression on her face as she took it and clasped it to her breast was pitiful to see.

She was moved by gratification with the cross and pleasure that Allison could have such a thought for her. She looked like one who, having been lost, has been found by an unexpectedly dear friend.

The days ran on. Their lives assumed a sort of orderliness dictated by their deeds and environment. Fortunately for both they avoided boredom. Every day they maintained constant vigil over sea and sky, and tacitly remained in each other's sight or hearing as much as possible.

Allison quickly observed that in their comings and goings they were naturally inclined to follow the same lines and that this would soon lead to the making of tracks, however faint they may be in all that rushing, luxuriant growth. So he imposed a rule that neither singly nor together would they come or go over the same ground twice. He taught the nun how to make roundabout departures and approaches, how to watch the ground for her own footprints and avoid them. Even with this rule strictly obeyed it was still hard to avoid making sign.

One day, when Sister Angela was on guard up on the hillside, and he sat in the little river bathing himself, he saw that he had already beaten down a patch on the river bank. It was the spot where he usually stood for his dive. That was another thing to watch, and when he rejoined the nun he said, "Say, Sister, about washing—using the river. I found I'd bin making marks down there. You'll be careful about that, Sister?"

"Yes," she replied. "I hadn't thought of it. I see. I'll be careful."

"Wouldn't do for a bunch of Japs to come along and pick up our sign."

"You expect them to come here?"

"It's as likely as not," he replied. "They bomb the place. Then they send recon planes over. Seems to me they oughter land. Anyway, we ain't taking no chances. We got to keep watch and we got to see we don't make sign."

"Very well I'll be careful. I want to go down to the river now."

He watched her as she went down the hill, her black habit sharp against the vivid jungle green. He leaned against a tree, his eyes darting over the valley to the sea and back to the retreating figure of the nun. He had a little worry for her. There were snakes in the bush and at night they'd heard the cries of large animals. He wondered if there were tigers or leopards on the island, or maybe panthers, and he made up his mind to search the mud of the river banks for paw marks.

Sister Angela had disappeared now. He supposed she was down in some secluded part of the river, bathing herself or washing her clothing. What would she look like, in the water without that voluminous gown? The thought startled him. He felt his face grow hot, and he tried to put the thought from him, but it persisted. What was she like, anyhow, his mind asked. She wasn't old; probably not as old as himself. Her face was young and it was—was—well, it was a nice face.

He tried to judge her face by standards with which he was familiar—movie stars, magazine cover girls, stenographers, waitresses, salesgirls, dancing partners—but somehow it could not be done that way. They were girls of the everyday world. When you looked at them you sized them up. You looked first to see if they were pretty and easy to look at, and if they were you looked again to see by their eyes or their mouths or by the whole face whether there was a response to your look.

But you couldn't judge a nun's face by the faces of everyday girls. There was a difference about it. There was its quietness, and its strange, aloof look. It wasn't inviting, nor was it indifferent. It had life and intelligence and laughter and warmth. But the look it gave you was an impersonal one.

It just wasn't a face of the ordinary world of shops and streets and houses and drug stores and people going to work and home again. Nor was it a face you'd expect to meet in the middle of a war, and you alone with it on an island in alien seas. Well, it was—it was a nice face, you could bet. It sort of got you.

There was no challenge in it, no awareness that you were a man, yet it was soft and kindly, and there was no weakness in it. Yet it was all a woman's face. But what sort of a face? What sort of a—?

Allison shook himself and stood away from the tree. What the hell was he thinking about, anyway. He frowned, and spat from the side of his mouth, uneasy and troubled. He forced himself not to think of Sister Angela, but of their condition, what was to be done about getting food, about trapping a pig or spearing a fish, about keeping the fire alight in the valley, about whether the marines would come back—

But his mind was in the grip of his instincts and they wanted his mind to consider Sister Angela, so that in the midst of thought about

fish or fire or Japs, swift and undisciplined thoughts about her body and her age and her virginity shot into his mind, leered at him an instant, then vanished. He began to walk about, wishing she would return, because he felt that in her living presence, with her candid eyes upon him and her gentle voice speaking to him, his only thoughts would be of her as a comrade in distress, and of her as a holy woman to whom all reverence and respect were due.

She'd prayed for him, he supposed, and momentarily was humbled by the thought of it. But she was down there in the river now, and was she well-made? Could she swim? How white would she be against the jungle or in the brown water? How—he stamped furiously about, muttering epithets to himself, trying to shake off the man-thoughts and take and hold the soldier-thoughts about food and Japs. But he wasn't wholly successful and it came to him that since he and the nun were likely to be together, isolated like this, for some time, these vagrant, tempting thoughts were sure to come at him again.

"The hell with it," he muttered, furiously, and went stamping away to the hilltop, resolutely thinking about spearing a fish. But the tiny ember of desire was merely dampened, not extinguished.

In the dusk, when he knew she couldn't see his face, he said to her, "Look, Sister, I been wondering about—about praying. What I mean, suppose a man now, wanted to stop himself—well, from doing things he shouldn't do. You reckon he could pray about it and not do the things?"

A keener ear than hers would have detected the faint desperation in his tone, and realised that his words were the result of some struggle or other. But Sister Angela didn't know him well enough as yet, or was startled by his words, or realised some urgency in them, and was afraid of error, at any rate she didn't answer him at once, but was silent, trying to see her way so long that he began to think she didn't mean to answer and he tried to see her face in the thickening dusk. Then she answered, but she was outside the core of the thing and knew it, and had to search for a way in.

"You should not worry too much about the future," she began. "When we—if we get away from here, how do you know what you will do? What could you do here that would be wrong? There is nobody but ourselves."

He wanted to say, "That's it, that's it. Only ourselves and nobody but you, and me thinking things and nobody to stop me but you and you a woman. That's it, that's it!" But he didn't because he was aware they were in different lines of thought, so he said, "Yes, yes, I guess so. I wasn't thinking about when we get away—I wasn't thinking about—well, I reckon I was just thinking about praying. Could it help a man?"

FULL of conviction her voice came, "It has helped me. Times out of number it has helped me. I couldn't have endured this—she flung out an expressive arm at the night and the jungle and their situation—"without praying and knowing my prayers were heard. Of course it will help you. It will help anybody, if they believe. I thought you knew that."

He had nothing to say to that, and she asked, "What is your faith, Mr. Allison?"

He thought she was asking whether he believed in God. Had a man asked him that he would have given some flippant answer which would have turned the question aside unanswered. Had she been a lay woman he would probably have answered according to whether he wished to please her or not. Because she was Sister Angela, asking him from the mystery of her calling, he wasn't sure how to answer.

"My faith?" he replied. "Well, guess there's a God. I reckon it's

something like the sun or America or knowing you're alive. Feller don't talk much about the sun, 'cept to say it's hot. Don't think much about it. Same way with America. Fellers don't talk about it."

"The big shots do. They come along and lecture a crowd of fellers and the fellers jeer at 'em and feel sort of ashamed for them and their big mouths. But a feller knows America is there, all right. Guess a guy don't think much about his country when he's at home, and there's peace and he's got a job. But you get to thinking about it in a war, and you get shoved off somewhere with a gun because you know some foreign country means to harm America if you and all the rest don't do something about it. Guess a feller would think about the sun, too, if he had to live in Iceland or one of them towns where there ain't much sun. Me, I been in California a lot."

He paused, staring unseeingly at the now black jungle, and swiped at some crawling thing on his neck. "Guess that's how she lies," he continued. "Feller don't talk about God, but he knows about Him. It sort of gets you when you're alone, in the night." He laughed shortly. "Guess a man don't feel so big when he's alone in the dark. He'd be pretty scared if he didn't have something to hang on to."

He felt silent, thinking about it. His mind explored questions that it hadn't encountered before. He had not expected to make such a confession to anyone. It denuded him of some of the hardness he had built up between his inner self and the world.

It reduced him so that he looked at Sister Angela with a queer yearning for maternal comfort. Bold and determined enough to deal with the physical aspects of life on the island, he was as a puzzled child when confronted with these spiritual questions. To him Sister Angela now assumed a new form. She was the ageless mother, the woman who knew, the wise comforter to whom the child was turning with the problems that baffled and alarmed his groping thoughts, someone who would soothe his fears and dry his tears. At a gesture from her he would have laid his head on her bosom and sighed his relief for the protection of maternal arms and the sweetness of a maternal voice.

Sister Angela made no such gesture. She was a single-minded woman, she wanted to help him, but to her his spoken question was paramount and she awaited the opportunity to persuade him that in prayer lay his refuge and his hope of rescue.

"I am glad that you believe," Sister Angela said. "Though that is not what I meant. I meant your church. Are you a Catholic—you hadn't seemed so to me—or do you follow some other church?"

"I don't have any church, Sister," he said, recovering himself. "My mother was Episcopalian. I went along with her when I was a little feller. But I don't guess I bothered after I left home. Has a feller got to be in a church to get his prayers heard?" The question was without gibe or sarcasm.

"Oh, no, not I didn't mean that," she said quickly. "But you asked me about prayers, you know, and so I wondered what kind of prayers you know. I—"

"Aw, I know about 'Our Father' and some other stuff they give us on church parade. The padre could sure use words, but—"

"Those are general prayers, Mr. Allison. They're offered on behalf of a company of people. They're different from individual prayers—private prayers. Nobody could very well tell you what to say when you pray for yourself. They wouldn't know what troubled you."

"But I've seen you praying. You know what to say."

"Oh, yes. But I know what I'm praying for. I know, too, that even if my words are halting and do not express what is in my heart, the Holy Mother knows—Jesus knows—the



Father knows—even better than I do, what I want. And so there is peace for me, after prayer, for I know the prayer is heard."

Allison could not see her face in the darkness, but he could feel her earnestness. It was all about her, like an air. He wasn't satisfied with that; he wanted something more. He was like a disciple of old calling for a miracle to dispel his doubts.

"Yes," he said. "I reckon you might know it's heard. But suppose it ain't answered? How about you not getting what you pray for?"

She replied readily. "A parent doesn't always yield to the child's request, Mr. Allison. The parent can see much farther than the child and knows whether or not the granting of the request will be harmful. Let me see. Suppose a little boy entreats his father for a gun. The father knows what the child doesn't know; that the gun is dangerous in untrained hands. So he refuses. Do you see?"

"You mean prayin' to God is like asking a parent for something?"

"Substantially, yes. God is the Father of us all; all-wise, all-seeing Father. He knows what is good for us and what is bad."

"You reckon if a feller prays an' he don't get what he prays for it's because it ain't good for him to have it?"

"Yes."

This was not what he was seeking. He was concerned about wanting the thing, not about actually having it. He tried again.

"Look, Sister, how about thoughts? How about if a feller don't want to think things because he knows thinking them is bad?"

She took some time with this, analysing it. Even while he awaited her answer, Allison was disturbed by her physical nearness. He moved back slightly, exerting his will against his thoughts.

"Thoughts," she mused aloud. "Thoughts. Well, there's a distinction. Thoughts and wants are separate. I suppose some thoughts could be more evil than the wants. I suppose the thoughts start the wants. Oh, I don't know about that." She paused. "But, yes, prayer would be an antidote. Like action. Have you tried action when thoughts trouble you? You see, I'm trying to understand this. You want to pray against some kind of thought. Is that it?"

Allison was alarmed at this. If she kept on probing she might discover the kind of thoughts that were troubling him. Nevertheless, he replied, "Yes, I guess that's it."

"Try prayer," she said. "You can pray in thought without using words. Try thinking a prayer—when bad thoughts come to you. I'm sure that will help." Her voice became warm. "You won't be alone. I shall pray for you. You are my dear friend in this distress and I shall pray for you and I know Blessed Mary and the saints will hear us."

Without further word she turned away. He sensed rather than saw that she was going to her dugout and the altar therein.

He pondered this inner vision of her kneeling before the altar, and somehow he was conscious of failure. He stood on the hillside, with the black jungle all about him, hearing the sea beyond and the jungle noises nearby. He looked up at the splendor of the cloudless sky, where the stars seemed so near as to be almost within reach, and he started slightly as some meteor, a billion miles away, shot across a tiny arc of the vault, glowing for a fraction of a second before it vanished for ever. He knew himself to be small and alone in all that vastness of sky, with the great seas all about him and the jungle pressing on every side.

He had a mental picture of America. He lived again the wild, fierce days of Bataan, and wistfully he saw himself and his company going out into the jungle and not returning.

And then he burned to know how matters went, but could not know; and stood there, lonely and afraid and wondering, but with one firm grip on the confidence that his fellow-fought on somewhere, and that America stood strong as her own Rocky Mountains, untouched by an enemy foot. For himself there was still hope while he was alive and free.

Though all the world was black and silent and blind under the stars, and he knew no way home, and was anxious and lonely, he could feel the strong pulse of his heart and there arose through the mists of doubt the optimism of the young. He crinkled up his eyes, looked once more at the stars and moved to his foxhole.

In there he lay on his crude bunk of palm fronds, his hands under his head, and stared up at the blackness, his mouth working on a twig, which he occasionally sucked as though it were a cigarette.

Presently his mouth stopped moving and the twig fell unheeded to his chest, as his thoughts drifted idly and were blank or moved again—until there stood against the darkness Dora's bright eyes, and waved hair, and red mouth.

HE was among the marines and there was much confused rushing and shouting, all running along the street while girls leaned from the windows and cried out to them. He tried to see the girls, but the raft wouldn't keep still and two Filipinos played on drums until the drums soared into the air and were bright red, and grew and grew until there was no room for anybody, and the drums hid everything until he burst through the rhododendrons and was on the green lawn, with white sheets all along the wall.

He saw the people waiting, just beyond the wall, while the sailor sounded the bugle and then took his mouth away from it and blew great clouds of smoke at Allison, and grinned. Then the girls came and wrapped the sheets about themselves and danced and ran; and he stood apart from the people because he knew the sheets would fall and reveal the girls. But the girls all ran through the hole in the side of the ship, and there was nobody left, only Sister Angela sitting in her boat, with her hood thrown back and her shoulders bare, smiling at him. Her face was painted and he saw the look in her eyes and looked again, thinking it was Dora, and she stood closer to him and began to strip the black robes from herself. He leaned forward, gripping the gunwale of the boat to steady it, trying to see her body, but there was nothing only the face, and it changed flowingly into three white flowers which shuddered violently and showered their petals everywhere until he saw that it was snow and heard bells ringing.

He looked up, far up into the great roof of the church, and saw all the nuns going by, two by two along a gallery, singing and not aware of him, but distant and far out of reach. He tried to walk forward, but he was in the courtyard and there was a platform, and on it a girl whose face he could not see, but she wore a white garment like a fine net and he saw the nipples of her breasts and the gleam of her thighs through the net. The people came forward, laughing and cheering, and carried him to the platform and held him up while the girl bent and kissed him. The girl raised herself and he still could not see her face, though he struggled to do so, and felt that he would die if he didn't see it. He reached out to grasp her and pull her to him. The people laughed and the girl stood away from him, and still he could not see her face.

He fought against the crowd, sweating and striving and crying out at them, and suddenly it was all darkness, and he was sitting up, glaring at the darkness and hearing Sister Angela, somewhere far off,

calling "Mr. Allison! What is it? What is it?"

It took him a few seconds to realise that he had been dreaming and was now awake. Then the bitterness of the reality as compared with the dream shocked him a little. He drew in his breath and got a grip on himself, and answered, "Nothing. Wild dream, I guess. Was I yelling?"

"Oh, you cried out several times. It frightened me. Are you all right?"

"All right," he called. "Yes, I'm all right. It was a dream—kind of nightmare, I guess. I'm all right."

"I'll go back. I'm glad it's all right."

"Yes, all right. Good night, Sister."

"Good night, Mr. Allison."

In the morning his memory was confused with remembered bits of broken dreams, and a clear picture of the faceless girl in the white net and of Sister Angela with her shoulders bare. In daylight it was all distant and foolish, and fantastic, and he grinned wryly at it, feeling spent. The morning was fresh, and he thought with a sense of relief that it was a sign of no rain in this tropical country.

He crawled from the foxhole to see the sun lighting the jungle tops. A honey bear shambled hurriedly out of sight. He stretched himself, idly wondering how many mornings this made of his time on the island. "What's it matter, anyway?" he mumbled.

He eyed the hidden entrance of Sister Angela's foxhole. There was no sound from within and he crinkled up his face and spat sideways. Then he walked away softly and went down to the little river, where he stripped and bathed, feeling the cold water wash away the aftermath of his dreams. Later, he stoked the sullen fire and returned up the hill.

They ate a breakfast of yams and coconut milk. He told her of his speculation about the length of time they had been on the island.

"We should keep a record," she suggested. "We could cut notches—a notch for each day—in a tree, eh?"

She had it in her mind that by this means she could maintain the fasts and vigils of her Order. Until now she had believed she could do it from memory, but this life was so completely foreign to everything she had known, and time here was so utterly continuous, in the sense that day slipped into night and night into day without bells or clocks or calls or the duties to which she was habituated, that she knew memory would not serve.

She hoped that notches on a tree would give her some sort of calendar by which to mark the duties of her Order, but she didn't tell Allison that.

She had come to dislike his scorn of these matters—or what she believed to be scorn—and she preferred not to talk about them. And when he answered her suggestion, plainly regarding it as of no use and possibly dangerous, she put it out of her mind, deciding that she would rely on memory as best she could. In reply to her suggestion he said:

"Well, maybe. I don't reckon it's any use. When we pull out of here we'll know what date it is from people that come to get us. We can work it out from that. No, we ain't cuttin' no notches. We gotta be leery of making any signs at all."

She said pensively, "I wonder who they'll be, and when they'll come, those people who come to get us? I wonder what is happening out there"—gesturing towards the sea—"I wonder how long it will be for Mr. Allison, you know we could—we could die here and nobody know it." The last words came out in a little rush.

"Aw, shucks!" He plainly shrank from the suggestion. "It won't come to that. Guess somebody will show up sooner or later. Anyhow, you

ain't scared o' dying, are you?" This was to rally her.

She bowed her head and made the sign of the cross. "No," she said slowly, "I don't believe I am. But it's natural to want to die among friends. And people like me, Mr. Allison, would like to have a priest with us—at the end."

"Yes," he said tonelessly. He didn't want to talk in this strain any more. It disturbed him. He gave a little shrug as though throwing something off, and added, "I'm getting after some fish. I got an idea about trapping some pigeons or some of them parrots. We'll make a pass at the fish first."

"Do you mind waiting a little?" she asked. "I've some chores to do down there." She pointed to the valley of the little river.

"Go ahead," he said. "I'll have a hunt round in that old settlement and keep watch at the same time. When you get through, come along there. I'll be there."

She went off down the hill and Allison went into his foxhole and turned up the heap of fern and palm which was his bunk, to let the air get at it, then he came out and went leisurely to the ruined settlement. The island seemed to have numerous pigs. He saw three rooting in a little hollow, and with memories of the one he had snared in the crude trap-fall, was playing with ideas of more elaborate traps when he emerged from the jungle on to the slope leading down to the bay, gulped, and leapt back into cover, all thoughts of birds and pigs and traps vanishing at sight of a medium-sized ship beside the broken wharf.

Japanese were busy on her decks and on the wharf. Out in the bay a destroyer and two smaller armed vessels, like sloops, were just coming to anchor. Between the wharf and the ruined bungalow about a score of men in skirmishing order, with rifles and light machine-guns at the ready, advanced towards him.

For perhaps half a minute he stood as though paralysed, then he backed swiftly into the brush, turned, and began running at full speed towards the little river. He did not call out, fearful that the enemy would hear his voice. He ran on, leaping low bushes and logs, swerving to avoid trees, crashing straight through undergrowth when he could see clear ground beyond. Panting and anxious, he emerged at the little river and looked for the nun. At first he could not see her, and, still afraid to call, ran upstream, his eyes searching the river and its banks.

ROUNDING a tangle of vine and brush he caught a flash in a shadowed pool to his left, and there she was, her short yellow hair gleaming, her back to him, up to her waist in water, vigorously washing herself. He jumped behind a bush and called urgently, "Sister! Sister! Where are you? The Japs are here. They've come! The Japs!" He heard a small cry and a disturbance of water, then nothing more until her voice called, "Here. I'm here. Here I am!"

He ran out and saw her, robed, staring at him in alarm. He gasped, "They're coming ashore. Shipload of 'em. Come on! Don't stand there!" He caught her hand and, literally dragging her, sprang away up the hill. She asked no questions, only did her best to keep up with him.

"Get in! Get in!" he cried, trying to watch all about and help her into the foxhole at the same time. When she had disappeared he tore and pulled at the branches and creepers to hide the entrance. He stood back and critically examined it, then turned to his own den. He went in backwards and reached out of the entrance, doing what he could to hide it. He left a small space through which to watch.

"Are you all right, Sister?" he called in a low voice. He had to call again, somewhat louder, and then she replied and he took it for an affirmative.

He leaned against the earth wall, his eyes sweeping the foreground before his foxhole, his ears alert for any sound. The minutes passed and there was neither movement nor any sound save those natural to the scene. Allison's excitement died down a little, and while he watched he considered the arrival of the enemy. What did the Japanese mean to do? Had they come to stay? If they had, he and the nun had slim chances of escaping them. They could remain in hiding for a day or two, presently they would have to have water and food. Sooner or later would come discovery, then capture or death.

There was nothing Allison could do about it, except try to avoid discovery as long as possible. The best way to do that was to avoid the Japs. He and the nun could stay underground by day, and do their hunting by night. He didn't like the idea. Water could be got by night, but there wouldn't be much chance of bringing down a bird or animal. Maybe they could fish.

Maybe they could spot a sleeping bird in the trees. The fish in the pools by night might leave a trail of phosphorus, and be speared. Then he remembered the place where the yams grew and felt a slight relief from worry. This led him to think that there was no reason why he shouldn't get coconuts by night, and he was cheered a little more.

He spat, his mind examining, planning, speculating. Then it occurred to him that he ought to have foreseen something like this and taken pains to stock the foxholes with coconuts and yams. This made him think of water again, and he began to worry, thinking that if the Japanese spread over the whole island it would be very dangerous even to go forth by night.

"Hell," he said, thinking that he and Sister Angela had become a little careless. They ought to have spotted the ships at sea. They'd become a little slack in their vigilance and here he'd almost walked straight into the enemy without warning.

He fell to wondering what the enemy proposed. What did they want this island for? Damn their hides, they seemed to be spreading all over the world. A slow rage warmed his blood. He gritted his teeth and in imagination saw himself fighting the Japanese with fists and teeth before they pulled him down. He felt around in the gloom of the foxhole and found a short, solid billet of wood. He took it to his peep-hole and resumed his watch, using the broken knife to hack out a rough grip so as to make of the billet a club.

Three short blasts of a warship's siren made him jump and his nerves tingle with alarm. He grasped his crude club, his eyes glaring through the peep-hole. Nothing moved. All the time he was conscious of Sister Angela. He wanted to talk to her. She had to be warned against doing certain things. They would have to make plans.

He waited awhile, watching, and when nothing happened he went to the rear wall and began gouging at it with the knife. He guessed there was about four feet of earth between the foxholes. He made the hole large enough for his head and shoulders to enter it as it lengthened. The soft black earth came away easily. He cut and gouged with the knife, then clawed it out with his hands. The spade was in the nun's foxhole. Every now and then he stopped his digging, went and peered anxiously through the peep-hole, saw nothing alarming, and resumed digging. After a while the knife broke through the wall and he heard Sister Angela's startled exclamation.

"It's me," he cried hurriedly, swiftly widening the hole until her face looked back at him. "I gotta talk to you, Sister, and this is the way to do it. You can block your end with something when we ain't talkin'."

There was glad relief in her answer.



"Oh, I was scared. I'm glad you thought to do it. I couldn't hear anything, and I was scared to call to you. Did you hear the siren? Have you seen anything?"

"No. But they'll be around. We gotta lay tight and close, Sister. We gotta stay in these holes all day. If them Japs get any idea we're here they'll comb the island inch by inch. We stay inside, like rabbits, while there's a speck of daylight. Quieter than mice, see? Maybe they could hear us talking like this, if they were close enough."

"I see." Her voice dropped to a whisper. "I—suppose they'll search the island—explore it. Let's hope they don't look at it too closely."

"We got too blamed careless," he said. "We was alone and we sort of stopped thinking they might come. I ought to be shot. There was always a good chance of 'em coming and they wasn't going to send us word of it. I ought to have known that. A man ought to—"

"Oh, you mustn't blame yourself for it," she interrupted. "You've been fine. I wouldn't have known what to do if I'd been alone." Then to his utter astonishment she laughed with great merriment.

"When I think of myself," she chuckled, "calmly sitting down there in the water and the Japanese coming ashore so close to me and—and—she gurgled—"oh, it's too funny for words."

"Yes," Allison said, somewhat suitably, for it seemed to him there was nothing to laugh about. Her words had conjured up for him a mental picture of a Japanese patrol bursting out of the jungle and her in the water as he had seen her. They might have fired first and asked questions afterwards, or they might have taken her and had her on the river bank and she naked while they gazed at her and—no, she wouldn't have seen anything funny in that.

He wondered whether to tell her that he had seen her in the water before he had called the alarm. Would she be amused about that? He recalled the vision of her naked back and shoulders in the river, and it came to him with sudden force how lovely she had looked. How white her shoulders were! Nothing angular about them. Rounded woman's shoulders. He touched his lips with his tongue, momentarily yielding to the excitement welling up in him, then caught himself and shook his head violently, and resolutely put it behind his mind.

"Say," he said, unaware that his voice had subtly changed to a tender note. "Say, I hope you ain't thirsty. I'm seven sorts of a fool. Ought to have some water stored. I'll go get some to-night. Though I ain't worried about water; it's food that may be will give us a headache. Ought to have had some stored, too. Wouldn't think a man could be such a blame fool. Not to think of that."

"Mr. Allison, you must stop worrying. There was no blame to you. Anyone might have overlooked it. I did, myself. And I'm not thirsty or hungry. Time enough yet to worry about it."

"Well, maybe." He was comforted a little by her attitude. He was silent in thought, then added, "We got to be on our prowling by night now. Means we gotta sleep in the day. We—"

A rifle sounded, sharp and alarming. He sprang to his peephole and gazed through it. Nothing stirred. A second shot slapped across the clearing. He placed it as down towards the little river.

"Hunting, I guess," he muttered. He remained at the peephole, peering out at the jungle listening. The single itself had become silent. When a noise was resumed he thought it safe to go to the communicating hole and call, "Hey, Sister! See anything?"

"No."

"All right. I'll keep watching."

Allison went back to his peephole and leaned there, looking out through the leafy slit, watching and listening, his thoughts busy. He discovered the tautness of his nerves when small sounds outside magnified themselves into Japanese marching. At intervals he heard his own

blood pulsing and the sound of it was like thunder.

"Hell to be cooped up," he muttered. He began to feel a sense of helplessness, the beginning of the panic of the trapped animal, and he recognised it and beat it off. But he couldn't stop himself wondering where the enemy was and when he would appear. He looked at the jungle and the small spaces in it, such as he could see from the peephole, and his imagination peopled it with the enemy.

It made him feel acutely that he was alone among them. In all the time on the island before this he had never felt so completely cut off from his own people; never had his hope of rescue been so dim.

All through his companionship with the nun he had been confident of rescue; convinced that sooner or later friendly figures would appear on the shore and friendly voices hail him. He had looked forward to the day as one looks forward to an important and pleasing event, wondering who would come, and picturing to himself their astonishment at discovering himself and the nun.

Now that was gone, vanished like a dream. Instead of friends the enemy had come. Leisurely and calmly and in small numbers, as though carrying out a harmless peacetime exercise, the Japanese had come, and there was that about the manner of their coming which suggested plainly that they feared no hostile interference; regarded themselves as masters of the area. The thought sickened Allison. A pang like a sudden emptiness went through him.

This almost unmanned him, for it was followed by a wave of self-pity. He almost wept for the loneliness and terror of it, and then his jaw tightened and a little flame seemed to run across his thoughts.

He nerved himself and felt strength flow back into him. He crinkled up his face and spat sideways, and through his beard he snarled at the impartial jungle. "You want me, you got to come and get me!" He sucked in his underlip and held it between his teeth, then he released it and muttered, "That goes for her, too."

Immediately he was relaxed and he rested more easily against the curtain wall of the foxhole, peering out, listening, his mind calm. Occasionally he left his post long enough to exchange a word or two with Sister Angela; sometimes he walked around the confined space to relieve the monotony of the watch.

He wondered how Sister Angela was taking it. From the nature of her secluded life and from her having spent much time closed up in convents, he supposed that she might be better able to take it than himself. He tried to picture her as she would be in a convent and, never having seen the inside of one, was left with the little he had read and heard of them.

WHAT did they think about, these holy women, in the mystery of their lives? What was there about that way of life that drew women into it? Cutting off their hair, wrapping themselves in shapeless and sombre gowns, sticking in convents or working in hospitals and poor-houses, going sedately and silently, two by two, through the streets of cities and as apart from the life about them as—Never having any fun, no ball games or movies or dances, like other girls. No sweethearts—yet having shoulders and arms that were lovely seen in the water when you came on them bathing—

He stamped hurriedly to the peephole and glared at the jungle, forcing himself to remember the Japanese out there. So passed the day.

Late that night, assuming that the enemy would be sleeping after having posted sentries about the camp, Allison left his foxhole and went down to the little river with Sister Angela's brass bowls. When he returned, walking as cautiously as a hunting Indian, balancing a

bowl of water in each hand, he found her outside her foxhole.

She drank gratefully, and said, "I'm foolish, I know, but you seemed to be away so long and I simply couldn't stay in there. Please, may I come with you next time?"

He could see no reason against it, and said so.

"Go easy on the water," he added. "It's gotta last till to-morrow night. And we gotta get some sleep."

"Yes," she assented. She took the bowl from which she had drunk and disappeared with it into her foxhole, as obedient as a child. Allison stood alone awhile, listening, then took his bowl and crept underground. He gave no thought to sleep, but slept almost at once, and was greatly astonished to awake and see the dawnlight filtering into the foxhole.

THAT day, while he watched through the slit, he heard alien voices and the movement of men somewhere near, but it was not until mid-afternoon that he tensed and nervously grasped the club. Five armed Japanese soldiers walked unhurriedly into his field of vision. They were about forty yards to his right, crossing a narrow opening in the jungle. He saw them chattering to each other, and one halted for a moment and waved a hand towards the north and laughed in a high-pitched voice. Then they passed out of sight.

When he was sure that there were no more Japanese about, Allison went to the little tunnel, called to Sister Angela, and told her what he had seen. It oppressed both of them. The enemy's ability to move about as they pleased shook their confidence.

They discussed the apparition in jerky, furtive voices, and each seemed rather glad to turn away from the other and resume the watch. The swift tropic darkness came and quietened the birds; the things of night began to move and cry in the jungle. Later, Allison and the nun made a slow, watchful journey to the little river and refilled their bowls, speaking rarely and in whispers, all their senses at hair-trigger tenseness, their minds obsessed with the imminence of the enemy camp.

Back in his foxhole, feeling more secure once both of them were hidden from the prying night, Allison lay down and felt hunger for the first time since coming to the island. The water he had drunk rumbled in his stomach when he moved and he got infantile amusement from listening to it. He was again astonished to awake and find the day.

All that day they neither saw nor heard Japanese. Sister Angela was curious about this; she even wondered if the Japanese had gone away.

"Don't you believe it," Allison said. "It's my guess they looked the place over, saw nothing to make them suspicious, and I reckon they conclude the island is uninhabited and they've withdrawn to the camp. But don't you go thinking they've gone away."

They saw nothing of the Japs next day and Allison decided to spy on the encampment. Sister Angela opposed the idea, both because she feared for him and because she didn't wish to be alone. She was more imaginative than he in some things, and she could visualise herself desperately waiting for an Allison who did not return.

Allison paid no attention to her opposition; didn't bother to argue against it. He didn't know how he would profit from spying on the Japanese, but he had a strong desire to see what they might be about. It was the urge of the quarry which, though knowing it is surrounded by enemies who are ignorant of its presence and that therefore safety lies in remaining hidden, is yet nagged by a persistent fear that it has been observed and that the enemy is merely biding its time.

Most of the time Allison was con-

fident that the Japanese did not suspect the presence of himself and Sister Angela, but in the night, lying awake in the darkness, his imagination peopled the brush with them, saw them creeping forward, saw them fingering the triggers of tommy-guns or fondling hand grenades. Sometimes it was as though his ears reached right down into their encampment and he could hear them discussing him and making plans to attack.

This sort of thing worried him; it brought little touches of panic. He felt that if he could look upon them and them unaware of it, his confidence would return.

He became obsessed with this project, and when the nun's persistent opposition overcame his patience he gruffly ordered her into her foxhole and told her to remain there until he returned. She peered closely at him, then silently turned and obeyed.

He went cautiously through the jungle, listening to the variety of coughs, bark, snarls, cries, and inhuman laughter which made up the jungle night sounds. His ears were alert for any human sound in that medley. His nose for any human smell. He was a natural scout and he moved through the jungle night in the fashion of a hunting beast, every sense eager to anticipate and ward off or escape danger.

His caution increased as he drew nearer the encampment. His feet felt every step before the weight of his body came down, his hands in front of him touched leaves and stems and he put them gently aside or squirmed around or under them. And at last he came to the fringe of the jungle on the edge of the clearing and looked out, crouched on one knee as his eyes searched the night.

There were lights—hooded blue lights designed to shield the camp from hostile aircraft—and he heard and sensed rather than saw movement.

Presently he made out the black bulk of a ship against the wharf, and there were blue lights on ship and wharf, and moving shadows which he could not distinguish. There was a sound of muted voices and once a laugh, followed by a burst of clatter so shrill that he grunted, "Huh, some of their kid soldiers."

He looked about for sentries, but it was impossible to see them. He grinned, then crinkled up his face and spat sideways, savoring a slow wave of relief to think that he had made it and the Japanese did not know he was watching them. But he had no illusions about sentries. They would be there all right, and if he wanted to discover them he had but to call out in his American voice or walk slowly into the clearing.

ALLISON rested easily on his stomach, watching and listening. Behind him the jungle chattered and squealed, and he had a brief thought that there were hunting and death in its shades, that there would be hunting and death around the clearing if the Japanese got a hint of his presence. But it was calm down there in the camp, and Allison had a feeling of power in the knowledge that the enemy did not know of him, did not suspect the presence of any enemy within miles.

It was strange that they kept no watch on the island's other shores. He would have expected them to have patrols out to the south and west, watching sea and sky, and the fact that they didn't must mean that their forces had swept far beyond this small place. Yet it was not usual for a military force in wartime to—His thoughts were abruptly scattered by the blast of a warship's siren from out in the bay. A shrill whistle piped from the ship at the wharf. The wharf lights winked out all save one.

Then he saw the dim shape of a destroyer creeping slowly shoreward. She appeared to stop, then he realised that she had veered. There was some distant shouting and clanking, then the transport moved away from the wharf and began to follow the destroyer out to sea. Re-

membering that there had been another destroyer, he looked for her and was just able to make her out, well out to sea and moving oceanwards. He looked back at the nearer ships and suddenly realised that the destroyer was towing the transport, warping her away from the wharf and evidently into the channel.

His heart gave a wild leap, for he supposed for a moment that the Japanese were abandoning the island. His excitement died at once, for he heard voices from the encampment. Yet he was cheered by the going of the ships. Until they, or others, returned, there would only be the small force in the camp.

It was absurd to believe that the position of himself and Sister Angela was improved thereby; yet he believed it, deriving some pathetic hope from the knowledge that his enemies were a few hundred fewer. He debated with himself the chances of getting closer to the camp.

Next day he determined to spy on the encampment, and returning to their foxholes, he reported to Sister Angela.

He went back with less caution, almost without caution at all as far as the Japanese were concerned, and he bent by Sister Angela's foxhole and called to her. She answered with a glad relief that warmed his heart with pleasure and flattered the protective male instinct in him. It gave him a new, strong sense of being wanted. He didn't understand that he had been lonely on his scouting expedition and that he was now experiencing the relief of relaxed nerves, nor did he understand why he felt as does a man who comes home after working hard and long and is warmly welcomed. He neither understood nor questioned the feeling, though he savored the pleasure of it.

"The ships have pulled out. First off, I thought they was all leaving. But it ain't so. There's only the ones in the camp now. The ships have gone," he said.

"The ships have gone?" she echoed, in wonder.

"Yep. But there's Japs down there. There's still some down there. I'm hoping it's only a little lot—what they call a token force. Maybe this island ain't important; maybe it's no good to them. Maybe they thought it was, at first, and changed their minds. Come to think of it, you could not get more than four-five big ships in the bay and there ain't no place for an airstrip. Flying-boats maybe, but no airstrip. Maybe them that's left will stick close to camp—if they do, might be we can do some hunting by day."

"It would be nice," she said absently, as though considering an invitation to tea. "It would be nice to have something to eat. I've been too upset to think of it until this minute. I'm hungry."

"Let's not talk about that," he said. "How is your water?"

"I've enough. Hadn't you better rest, Mr. Allison?"

"Yep. I'm gonna look that camp over in daylight. You wake up and it's near dawn, you call me. See?"

"Oh, do you think you should risk being—"

"Look, we gotta eat, ain't we? If maybe we can be sure they'll stick close to camp, we can do some daylight hunting; maybe spear a fish or knock down a bird. Well, good night, Sister."

He crawled into his foxhole, weary now that the first excitement had gone out of him, and feeling let down after the nervous strain. Hunger bothered him for awhile, but exhaustion soon put him to sleep.

When the swift tropic dawn came Allison was lying in the fringe of jungle above the Japanese camp. The bay was empty of ships. At once he spotted a sentry. The man was on a platform, rigged on four poles, about twenty feet above ground. The poles stood in what once had been the bungalow garden. He was about three hundred yards from Allison, but in the sharp dawn light Allison clearly saw the uniform, the Japanese steel helmet, the tommy-gun hanging from his sling on the light bamboo railing



round the platform. The sentry was short and squarely built. He stretched and yawned, then lit a cigarette and leaned against the rail, slightly turned away from Allison, apparently looking at the sea.

Presently there was movement in the camp. Men hurried about. Smoke arose from cooking fires. A whistle sounded and there was an assembly and the formation of ranks. Two or three officers appeared, there was some running about, shouted words came up to the watcher. Allison counted them, making the detachment to number twenty men with probably two officers and four non-coms. He hurried back to the foxholes.

"They're eating, the greedy little devils," he growled to Sister Angela. "While they're at it I'm going to hunt some chow. I won't be long."

"You will be careful," she cried, but he didn't hear her as he hurried away towards the little river.

Three hours later he returned. Answering her greeting shortly he clambered into his foxhole and called her to the communicating hole between their dens.

"Here," he said, half between anger and disgust, handing her some pale, watery-looking roots like diminutive parsnips. "They're yams. Found 'em where the wild pigs had been rooting, down there in the bottom. Our fire is out. Just as well it is. Got nothing to cook with now, even if we had anything to cook. You can chew them yams. They're mostly water, at that." He paused, sunk in thought, then added, "Say, maybe we better give up? Maybe ain't nothing them Japs can do would be worse than starving to death. Guess I hunted all over. No fruit, no birds, not but the yams. Eat 'em, Sister, eat 'em. Maybe if they don't fatten you, they'll fill you—or kill you." His voice cracked on a semi-hysterical note. He began to laugh in a queer, mirthless fashion.

**I**N the semi-gloom of her den Sister Angela wiped the earth from a yam and bit into it. She listened to Allison, but didn't know what to say to him. His strange laughter scared her. It made her shiver. Her silence probably sobered him more than words could have done.

Indeed, had she spoken sympathetically, or tried to encourage him, he'd have probably broken down. Half-starved, weary, almost bereft of hope, his nerves frayed, it needed only a word of pity or some fatuous attempt at cheer to have either reduced him to utter weakness or aroused in him a reckless madness of rage which would have sent him yelling, in a bare-handed rush, upon the enemy.

When his laughter ceased there was a silence between them. Both had their own thoughts of hunger and hopelessness.

The nun savored the earthy tuber and listened to the silence in fear. When he spoke it was with such sanity that she burst into silent weeping, relief sending the tears welling from her eyes.

"Guess I'll have me a siesta, Sister. You keep awake and watch."

"Yes," she said.

Another dawn and Allison lay again in position to watch the Japanese camp. He had come as though driven, spurred by a queer mixture of curiosity, fascination with the impudence of it, a desire to look upon other men at their alien business. He had wanted, too, to think more about surrendering and to try to discover from the enemy's bearing what such a surrender would mean. And there was a sweet excitement in spying upon the enemy.

As before he saw the assembly, the change of sentries, the dispersal. This time he remained, curious to see what they did with the day. No ships could be seen.

Watching, he began to think about the sentry. Was there only the one? His eyes searched the camp, the wharf, and the immediate sur-

roundings. No other guard appeared to be mounted. He had been there with the dawn and he was certain nobody had come into the camp or gone out of it. The man in the wooden tower was the only lookout. It was all wrong, contrary to the practice of a military force at war and occupying conquered territory.

There should have been sentries or pickets at vantage points all round the island's coast; there should have been a traffic between the camp and outposts; there should have been more sentries about the camp itself. Allison pondered this. He felt there was significance in it, but he could not identify it.

The tower watch was evidently a watch on sea and sky. It could only mean that the Japanese were convinced that they were in little danger, that it was unnecessary to watch the island or its coasts. He could see no signs of any lines of defence against attack. Soldiers in their position should have had machine-gun and mortar posts hidden in the jungle perimeter to cover the bay landings and camp itself.

That there was none of this depressed Allison, for it suggested that this island was far behind the combat areas, so far behind and with so many Japanese forces between it and danger that anything more than a perfunctory watch was unnecessary.

Prone on his stomach, his face resting in his cupped hands, the lone American gazed at the Japanese camp through slitted eyes, his head full of conjecture, slowly reaching conclusions that dismayed him. One part of him refused to accept the dreadful truth that he was so far from hope of rescue as to be already doomed; the practical part of him saw the sickening implications with stark clarity.

He closed his eyes in an agony of loneliness and despair, then nerved himself somewhat, opened them, crinkled up his face and spat sideways. A look of grim resignation came into his eyes and his jaw jutted; the very hopelessness of his position pushed surrender out of his mind. "You want me," he muttered, "you damn well get me." His eyes opened a little wider as four Japanese walked out on to the ruined wharf. Why hadn't they patched it up, he wondered, seeing the bomb damage in the morning light.

Two of the four stripped their clothing off. The other two flung their arms and Allison saw tiny black objects plunge into the water. The water heaved and there was dull booming. The naked men each took what looked like a basket or box, and jumped into the water.

"Huh," Allison muttered. "Stunning fish with grenades." It reminded him of his own hunger.

After the fishing, what appeared to be the whole force, with the exception of the elevated sentry, went down to the water and began bathing and splashing. He caught the tail-ends of shouts and laughter.

He watched a little while longer, then withdrew and went back to the waiting nun.

"Seems like," he told her, "they was just on manoeuvres and having themselves a good time. But that won't do. There's a war and they're combat troops. Reckon they got a slack officer and the discipline is shot to pieces, like it happens sometimes in any army, or their army is gone so far past here they're in a back area and ain't scared of anything except maybe air attack. That's why they got that man in the tower. He's watching the sky and maybe the sea. You take it from me, Sister, we're way back behind the fighting—we're a mighty long way back."

She took this in gravely.

"You mean—that is, if what you say is so—we might have to wait for—for a long time. You mean we can't hope to be found for—for months, perhaps?" She whispered the last words.

"Maybe for years," he said.

She looked at him, trying to read his face. He met her look candidly

and saw her eyes slowly dilate with the implications of it.

"Yep," he said.

He saw uncertainty and fear in her eyes. Her mouth was trembling. She put out a hand blindly and he grasped it in his dirty paw and held it firmly until she got a grip on herself.

"Well, I had to tell you, I guess," he said.

"Yes," she whispered. She withdrew her hand and turned into her foxhole.

Allison watched her go, and his main feeling was apathy. Then he drew a hand across his face in a gesture of weariness and turned away into the jungle to search for more yams.

They said little to each other that night. In her den the nun told her rosary and lost herself in the comfort of her faith. Allison lay in his hole and heard his belly rattling and rumbling with the water in it and stared hopelessly at the darkness, hearing the chorus of the jungle outside and strongly tempted to open his mouth and howl back at the free creatures of the night.

**H**UNGER sharpened Allison. It overcame his apathy, made him more reckless, or, rather, less cautious. The desire for food imbued him with a more daring confidence. Made bolder, too, by his knowledge of the Japanese camp routine, he took his rude spear to the western shore the next morning, and there caught several crabs and two cod. On the journey to and from the coast he searched the jungle for edible fruits, but without success. The few coconut palms in that area seemed to be devoid of fruit; had there been coconuts it is doubtful if he would have had the strength to climb for them.

Sister Angela entered his foxhole when he returned. He broke up one of the crabs, but the sight of the grey, quivering flesh nauseated them both, and they could not bring themselves to taste it. By common consent they turned away from the reeking mess. With his broken knife Allison scaled one of the cod and disembowelled it. Then, closing his eyes, he hurriedly put a piece of the cold, raw fish in his mouth and closed his teeth.

The nun's eyes were on him, eagerly watching his reaction. He grinned at her and nodded. Then he cut two pieces of fish, gave her one and put the other in his mouth, chewing it quickly. She imitated him then hurriedly arose and, holding a hand to her mouth, scrambled outside.

The morning was well on when he looked again upon the enemy camp. From a cloudless sky the sun lit island and sea so that objects on land stood out in sharp etched clarity, and the sea, calm with a long slow swell, sparkled as only the Pacific does on such a day.

Men moved about the camp; there was a leisurely traffic between the wharf and the ruined bungalow, the tents and the remnants of the sheds. He noted how the walkers here and there skirted the edges of bomb craters. His stomach was making play with the raw fish, the earlier twinges of pain and the feeling of discomfort died away and were succeeded by somnolence.

The weakness of starvation and continuously tense nerves had brought a sweat of exhaustion on his body from the walk to his vantage point. He could feel the sweat clammy where his body touched the ground. When he felt sleep creeping over him he reassured himself that the Japanese were no more active than an idle camp demanded, then he crept deep into the brush and its shade, and stretched himself to doze.

The sun on his face awoke him. He lay still a moment or two, turned his face away from the sun, yawned and moistened his dry lips. Hunger had returned. He crept out and looked at the camp. It was active now. A party had gathered to-

wards the end of the wharf and in twos and threes others were moving out to join it. Allison arose carefully and peered out to sea. No ship was in sight. He looked up at the sky and listened, but could hear nothing save the ceaseless bird noises of the jungle. He lay down again, watching the Japanese, wondering what they were about.

He saw five soldiers walk towards the wharf, halt, wave their arms to somebody out on the wharf, then turn away along the bay to his right. He saw several swimmers in the water, and a group playing water polo.

The sight of it offended him. He experienced a wholly new emotion of bitter anger against their light-heartedness and their belief in their safety.

"If only a man had a machine-gun," he thought.

He watched them, one part of his mind occupied with their antics, another part bothered about the five who had gone round the bay. Thinking of those five, he crinkled up his face as he saw a monkey, two, then four monkeys, leap along the gallery and vanish into the building. He watched the black oblong of the doorway, expecting to see them rush forth with an indignant Japanese behind them. Nothing happened. He looked at the sentry in his tower. He had his back to him, obviously watching the water sports.

"They're looking for food, I guess," his thoughts ran. "Little beggars. Sweets in there, maybe. Or maybe just curious. A man—" His thoughts switched to a wild, impossible idea.

His jaw hardened suddenly and he began running at a tangent towards the east; he wanted to find those five men, to see what they were about. In a minute or so he saw them. They were nearly a mile away, plodding along the wet sand. Satisfied that their journey had no sinister meaning for him, and that they would continue it for some time, he hurried back until he had the camp in sight.

There he hesitated, studying the camp, thoughtfully looking from the crowd on the wharf to the sentry on the tower. The first shock of his idea had passed, but the idea itself remained, persistent and tempting. He studied the ground between himself and the tower, looking for cover. His mouth was dry and his breathing short. There was a weakness in his limbs and he fought it off, willing himself against his debility. He clenched his teeth and ground them, and tightened his fists in knots, nerving himself.

"What the hell!" he gritted out and ran, crouching, to a clump of palms fifty yards nearer the bungalow. With leaping nerves he looked at the wooden tower. The man was untroubled, his back to Allison.

Allison raced across a sunlit patch of brown grass and threw himself into a bomb crater, the edges of which were already overgrown with the urgent tropic foliage. He lay on his face, gulping in air.

He lifted his head cautiously and the sentry moved, causing him to duck and lie still. When he stole another look the sentry was still watching the sports. Allison drew in his breath, crawled from the crater, and darted obliquely to a clump of low bushes. He crouched there in a growing panic, for his nerve suddenly deserted him and he wanted to be back in the jungle, away from this mad idea and the terrible danger. His panic increased as he realised that he couldn't go back; couldn't start to go back without turning and running like a mad thing—which would mean certain discovery and the crashing of the sentry's Tommy-gun. Then something snapped inside him and he was suddenly cool, with new strength and determination.

Excitement gave way to a steadiness of spirit that exhilarated him. He arose slowly, shoved his hands in his pockets, and walked almost sedately the hundred feet or so to the bungalow, never shifting his eyes from the man on the platform

except to watch the ground in front of him.

Then, behind a corner of the wall and hidden from the sentry, he suffered another reaction. He was almost certain that sardonic yellow faces watched him from above Tommy-guns in the black shadows of the bungalow, he could almost hear their shrill amusement as their hands swung the guns up to riddle him. It seemed he leaned against the wall for an hour of agonising suspense.

Nothing happened. He could hear the shouts from the bathers and it calmed him. The tautness went out of his muscles and he slipped along the wall to where a dirty tarpaulin was tied over the jagged hole a bomb had made. A moment of stillness as he watched and listened, then he slipped off his boots and was through the tarpaulin and inside the bungalow.

Almost at once he was the trained soldier again, his will disciplining his nerves; his brief experience as a guerrilla in the Philippines coming to his aid.

Recalling the lay-out of the bungalow as he had seen it when he searched it before the enemy came, he made for the kitchen. In there were stacked boxes, crates and packages. He eyed the American brands and numbers on some of them and guessed he was looking at pillage from the Philippines.

He had two things to do, and quickly: make a selection of food-stuffs and do it in such a way that the Japanese would not discover the loss at once.

He worked rapidly and silently, his ears alert for the slightest sound. He had a rice sack almost full when a high voice called out. He leapt into the passage and froze there, hearing a distant answer. Allison dashed on tiptoe into the office, then darted to a tarpaulin and lifted it. There was nobody in sight. Fifteen feet or so from the wall was the weed-fringed crater of the bomb that had caused the hole the tarpaulin covered. Grasping his sack, Allison sidled through the opening and shot into the crater, where he huddled himself into a ball.

He broke into a sweat of fear, his heart pounding and his physical weakness asserting itself. He retched dryly and suffered an intense agony of collapse that dashed him.

**P**RESENTLY his will resumed control and he was aware that, in some strange manner, his consciousness was detached from his failing body. Then his nerves relaxed and his muscles stopped quivering and his body yielded to his will. He deliberately eased himself from the cramped position, lying sideways so that his eyes could watch the top of the crater.

He heard voices, the sound of movement within the bungalow, other sounds near and far, tensing himself when they appeared to draw near, relaxing as they moved away. His thoughts became orderly and he pondered his next move. Then he regretted having jumped into the hole, since he must now remain in it at least until night.

He guessed that darkness was a good three hours away. After it came he must wait another three or four hours before the camp settled down, listening to the sounds about him he sought some means of estimating the passage of time. But time seemed to have stopped. There was nothing but himself in this hole and the Japanese all around, waiting for him to show his head.

Things crawled among the leaves, they explored his body, got under his trouser ends, literally stamped their feet on the back of his back. When they got inside his shirt he tried to squirm without moving, then crushed them with his hands, feeling them squash against his skin. Small creatures with furred bodies looped among the vines. Wasps hovered above his head as though debating whether to attack or not. He gritted his teeth and his blood ran cold.



when a vivid green snake flowed easily across his feet and disappeared behind him. He couldn't control the flinching of his spine, which went on for a long time. Something drove a red-hot needle into his left ankle, but he couldn't see the insect or reptile nor feel it with his hand. The pain made him sick, but the effect of the poison passed swiftly and left the spot itchy.

The hours remained apparently immobile. Absurd thoughts troubled him. The Japs knew he was there. They were sneaking up quietly and tipping stinging insects and snakes into the hole, enjoying the joke, waiting to shoot him when it became too much. He heard a call and an answer, and was certain it referred to him. He was parched with thirst. His body ached and itched everywhere. Resolutely he put the absurd thoughts aside and tried to think of other things, or not to think at all.

Several times he had an almost irresistible desire to raise his head and steal a look at his enemies. The effort to keep his head down shook him. He caught himself with his head actually raised and trembled with weak rage at the discovery. He tried to push his mind into the future, and succeeded sufficiently to gain some sort of repose.

"When you're back home," his mind said, holding him in the hole. "When you're back home you can look back at this. When it's all over; when it's all over; all over."

He almost fell asleep and came out of it with a shock. He counted the leaves within his range of vision until they blurred into one vivid mass. He tried to work out mentally how much pay he would collect when he was rescued, and imagined himself spending it. "A big steak, that's what it'll be," he thought. "A big steak to start with." The steak grew in his mind's eye until it was the size of a blanket.

A beetle swung on a blade of grass and the blade bent slowly with the beetle's weight until it was close to his nose. He blew gently and watched the beetle cling grimly to the swaying grass. What would Sister Angela do if a beetle got down her dress? What was she doing now? She wouldn't be blowing at anything—

A loud shout snapped his thoughts short. He shrank lower in the hole, believing it meant the discovery of the raid on the Japanese stores. But there was laughter in response to the shout and he breathed again.

"That's Joe," he thought. "Maybe got a letter from Mrs. Joe, beefing about her allotment. Maybe all she'll get is a tin medal. Come on, Joe. Come on and find me, Joe, and get that medal!"

A shadow that he hadn't noticed attracted him. He stared at it, and his heart moved as he realised that time hadn't stopped; that for the shadow to be there meant the day was near its end.

This was a tremendous tonic. The hope of getting away leapt to life again. Time stopped dragging. In a very little while, or so it seemed to him, he could see an enlargement of the shadow. The sky seemed to have lost its glare. In the treetops he could hear the movement and chatter of birds. Almost before he was ready for it the darkness came. He sighed his relief and stretched his limbs carefully.

He risked a look over the rim of his crater, but there was nothing save the shaded blue lights and a shadowy figure moving away from him. There were voices and the sound of booted feet on the bungalow floors, but it was all vague and there was no longer menace in the sounds. Gradually the camp quietened.

He was now so confident of himself that he became impatient. He fingered the neck of the sack, wanting to make the break, but forcing himself to wait. "What is your hurry?" he asked himself. "Got all night. We got all night." He now sat with his back to the crater wall, his head above ground, looking about him and listening. The darkness

was the most beautiful thing he had ever seen.

Later he went silently into the fringe of jungle above the bay, where he halted for a moment, with the familiar night sounds all about him, and realised that he had come through safely. His legs trembled and gave way, and he had to rest awhile. When he resumed his way all the spring had gone out of him. He was weary, sick with nervous exhaustion, and barely able to drag himself along when he came to the foxholes and croaked, "Sister! Sister! It's me, Allison."

There was no answer.

He went nearer to her foxhole and called again.

No answer. He stood frozen, one hand gripping the laden sack, alarm flooding over him. Suddenly he backed off, glaring about him, listening, even sniffing the air. Had the enemy found her and was now awaiting him in the darkness? There was no sound or sight or smell of human presence.

He crouched in the night, puzzled and alarmed, then he withdrew a little farther, shoved the sack deep into a tangle of vines and shrub, and crept back to the foxholes.

Cautiously he explored both of them, by feel and smell rather than by sight. He emerged from the nun's den and stood on the hillside, muttering. He retrieved the sack and took it into his foxhole, then set off down the valley of the little river, and searched the area as thoroughly as possible in the darkness.

Then, on an impulse, he made for the western shore, to the ruins of the village there.

She was sitting on the edge of the sea, in a cluster of rocks above the water. When he called to her she didn't move. He called again, and she started up and stood gazing towards him in silence. Then suddenly she ran at him in a stumbling way and put her hands upon him and patted him and felt him.

"It's you! Oh, it's you!" she cried, her voice breaking with hysterical relief and gladness.

She would have fallen, but that he caught and held her. He patted her shoulders soothingly, for he could hear her sobbing weakly.

"There, old girl. There, it's all right," he murmured, foolishly, having difficulty in keeping his voice firm.

He could feel her shuddering and knew that fear and despair were flowing out of her, and the tenderness he felt for her cleared away his weariness and vexation. It came to him strongly how much she meant to him, and he held her in this miserable and alien place. The knowledge gave him strength. He stood there with an arm about her, content to support her and comfort her while her fear drained away and her courage returned. Sister Angela was now weeping softly and freely, and he held her and crooned to her as a father to a child, looking over her bowed head to the dark sea and biting his bearded lips, a man alone amidst enemies and with a woman to protect, and angry that she should have been placed in this predicament of terror.

**S**UDDENLY a red flame ran along his blood and his eyes of her tightened. He closed his eyes, savoring the rush of passion; and his free hand moved involuntarily towards her bosom—but he snatched it away and with a distinct jerk of his nerves he stepped free of her.

He said, "Come, Sister, I'll take you home. Come, let's get back."

"Yes. Bless you, Mr. Allison. I thought—I thought I'd never see you again."

"Aw, shucks. I got held up, I guess."

"You were gone for so long. I—I thought they—well, I thought they had caught you. I waited hours—and you didn't come and I thought—"

"I was busy," his voice rose, for

he was suddenly excited with what he had to tell her. "Yep, I was sure busy. I got into their camp. Right into the camp. I got some chow and stuff. I had to wait. I got some chow. It held me up awhile, getting it. Come on. We got something to eat."

At the foxholes he had her wait outside while he crawled into his own and brought out the sack. She waited silently while he fished a can from it and quickly hacked away the lid with his broken knife. He divided the contents into two roughly equal parts, dug out his share and handed her the can.

"Eat," he said gruffly, the smell of the spiced beef overcoming him. "Go on, eat."

She ate, no less overcome.

Each of them could have eaten more, but he had the sense not to allow it. He put his head close to the ground and lit a cigarette, drawing in the smoke with long breaths of pleasure, cupping his hands about the glowing end.

**I**F he expected her to speak he was disappointed, for she was silently giving thanks for the food. Without waiting for her he began to tell her of his adventure and she listened without interruption, save for an exclamation as he reached this or that highlight in the story.

When the tale was done, and she had asked and he had answered many questions, both sat awhile in silence, bemused with the story. Then he asked, "What was you doing out there by the sea, when I came back?"

"I waited," she said thoughtfully, "for a long time. When you didn't return I began to think they—they must have discovered you. I tried not to believe it—I tried to think of other things, but it kept coming back. I couldn't stop myself imagining you captured or—killed Mr. Allison, you've never been away so long before. It frightened me. I prayed, and then it was better; I felt sure you were safe, but that something prevented you from coming back."

She paused, collecting her thoughts. Allison's cigarette glowed faintly as he drew at it.

"Then the sun went down," she continued, "and I felt sure you would come. But you didn't. I could hear the animals out there in the bush—and it got dark. And I—well, when it was dark it was worse. There was all the noise in the jungle and you hadn't come. I lost hope then. It was awful after that, for I had a feeling they'd caught you. 'Why delude yourself?' I said to myself. 'He is caught and now you are alone.'"

"I suppose I was crazy. You must forgive me. I'd tried to be brave, really I had, but it was so long and I knew you'd have come back if you could have. I said my prayers and it was better. But still you didn't come and I thought perhaps you were dead. I thought you'd perhaps been dead all day and—and—" She broke off, distressed.

"Well, I wasn't," he said.

"No, thanks to the Blessed Virgin. But I wasn't to know it; there was nothing to tell me you were alive. Some time, I don't know when it was, I felt there was nothing left any more except to bow to God's will, because I didn't know what to do. I had a feeling I couldn't stay in the foxhole, it was like being suffocated. I had to get out. I thought I would go to the sea and go out into the water and keep going until—but that is a mortal sin, and so I couldn't do it."

"There was nothing to do, then, except stay there by the sea and pray. I was resigned, you see. It was taken out of my hands, I just had to wait and pray. Sometimes I prayed with my voice and sometimes in my heart."

"Let's hit the hay," he said, abruptly. He gathered up the sack and left her.

She remained where she was for a few moments, astonished by his sudden going, then she crept into her foxhole.

In the morning he was cheerful as both of them examined the contents of the sack. The tally was: Four cans of American beef; a can of Australian beef; two cans with Japanese markings, and highly colored pictures suggesting that they contained meat—it made roughly ten pounds of canned meat; a four-ounce pack of Californian dried figs; a ten-pound sack of rice; a four-ounce pack of candied ginger (Chinese); a length of towelling stuff, six by two feet; a can of Australian jam; a tin cup; a broken hair comb; the half of a lead pencil; two packs of American and two packs of Japanese cigarettes, eighty cigarettes in all; a cigarette lighter and four books of Japanese matches; a length of cord and nine fish hooks; a small leather purse, empty; a small book in Japanese (he had mistaken it for cigarettes in his hurry); a bunch of thick rubber bands; the sack in which he had carried all this.

Allison knew that each can of meat, once opened and exposed to the tropic humidity, would have to be eaten quickly. They therefore proposed to avoid opening the meat as long as possible. He hoped to catch plenty of fish with the cord and hooks. Allowing one fire a day and the inevitable misses, he calculated they had enough matches for two hundred days—which turned out to be wildly optimistic.

He confidently assured Sister Angela that he could get along on one cigarette a day—another over-optimistic assumption, and that he could save the matches from damp by storing them in the empty meat cans. The length of towelling, the tin cup, and the comb he presented to her for her own use.

The book and the empty purse caused them some laughter. Allison explained that, "grabbing regardless" and in haste, he supposed book and purse had somehow "stuck" to his fingers. But he'd meant business when he took the rubber bands—with them he hoped to make catapults strong enough to bring down birds.

"Long as the Japs stay here and don't find us," he said, "we'll do no daylight hunting. But I guess we can fish at night and maybe get a shot at a roosting bird or possum or something in the moonlight."

They celebrated their riches with a feast. She boiled rice in her bowls and they opened another can of meat and mixed the meat with the rice. It wanted salt but they didn't mind that. They ate of the dried figs after the rice-meat hash and later, while Allison smoked an American cigarette with a pleasure that would have gratified the makers, the nun ate candied ginger.

**T**HE new food changed them. It not only gave them strength, but lifted their minds from the sullen groove of despair into which they had been drifting. Sister Angela came out of her long silences and talked. She was eager to talk about anything and everything. Her eyes lost their haunted, waiting look, and became brighter. She laughed readily.

They continued to stay in their foxholes by day, taking it in turns to watch. After five days of this, no searching parties having appeared, Allison became convinced that the enemy suspected no other human presence on the island, and he began going out by day again to spy upon the encampment. So far as he could see, the Japanese went stolidly about their business of occupying this small and unimportant post, apparently satisfied that they were in a backwater of the war's current and maintaining no more than the perfunctory watch on sea and sky.

The enemy's attitude of carelessness worried Allison. It argued that they felt completely secure from any hostile surprise.

"I wish to God," he said to the nun one night, "we could get some dope on the war. Way them Japs act, you'd think there wasn't any

war. It's the heck sitting here, not knowing."

"Yes," she said, in so very quiet a voice that he divined he had spoken the very thought she had about it.

"Maybe," he growled, "man could catch one of the little skunks and make him talk."

He played with that notion during the night, but with the dawn he laughed at it. And that day he was given more evidence of the confidence of the Japanese in their safety from attack.

He was on his way to spy on them when he heard shrill laughter somewhere down towards the valley of the little river. He stopped, tense and listening, waiting for the sound to identify it, not sure whether he had heard men or monkeys. Then he heard a shout that was distinctly human, followed by a squeal that held amusement in it. He backed hurriedly into the brush and crouched. Then, off to his right, he heard voices and sounds of movement.

He tried vainly to see through the intervening thickets. He debated with himself whether to lie still or get away from there. Alarm and curiosity overcame prudence and he began moving slowly and silently through the jungle, trying to follow the sounds and alert not to precipitate himself upon their attention. Presently he became aware that they were leading him down the slope to the little river and the site of the ruined church.

He became bolder when he heard distant shouts and then the splashing of water, for he guessed they were swimming in the river. He now knew himself to be within a hundred and fifty yards of the stream and he paused and looked about him.

About thirty yards ahead of him a gnarled old mahogany, its trunk laced with liana, reared itself. A few minutes later, from a tangle of leaf and vine about fifteen feet up the tree, he looked down on four Japanese bathing in the little river.

Two of them appeared to be racing each other, their arms flashing in the crawl stroke, a white foam of water bubbling behind their driving feet. A third sat on the river-bank beside a heap of discarded uniforms, his own uniform in a heap on his knees and hiding most of his nakedness from the watcher in the tree.

The fourth stood, back to Allison, up to his waist in the water, watching the swimmers. The squatting one turned the uniform over as though searching it, then raised one hand to his head, and Allison was struck by the length of the black hair. It fell to his shoulders.

Something about the squatting figure and the long hair and the gesture with the hand struck Allison, and he stared frowningly. Then the one in the water turned round and Allison almost fell out of the tree as he saw the full breasts of a woman.

The one that had been seated arose and Allison understood the long hair and the gesture. She was small and plump and she stood innocently nude, facing Allison, and stretched herself. Then she took a little run and dived into the water. The swimmers emerged along the stream and ran back, both young Japanese women, and jumped in with the other two, and there was much laughter and splashing and playful feminine shrieking. Allison remained in the tree, watching, until they left the river and dressed themselves. They wore Japanese jungle uniform and, at a distance and when clad, would have passed for somewhat diminutive Japanese soldiers.

They went off slowly back towards the encampment and the bemused Allison came down to earth, figuratively and literally. He leaned his back against the bole of the tree for awhile, thinking. When he made his way back to the foxhole, he carried with him the vision of that naked brown girl, small and plump, stretching herself on the river-bank. He stopped once and



looked back, crinkling up his bearded face. Then he went on through the afternoon back to the refuge in the hill, walking slowly, his mind busy with the implications of the bathing scene.

"So they got women here," his mind said, and realised that it confirmed his earlier suspicions that the Japanese believed themselves far behind the fighting zone. The significance of it depressed him, for it pushed even farther into the unseeable future that time of rescue to which both he and Sister Angela looked forward.

The knowledge that these were garrison rather than combat troops was a blow to that conviction he had tried to hold that his fellows would soon come, in ships or planes or both, to the island. Between him and his friends, he now saw, lay unguessed-at distances crowded with the enemy. He was almost overcome for a space, and rested despondently awhile.

When he resumed his way his mind had accepted the position to some extent, and the more he became used to the dire knowledge the less keen it became. His thoughts wandered to other things. The picture of the naked women, there in the sunlight, was sharp in his memory, and his blood warmed as his mind played with visions. He played along with his day-dream until it became too much, so that he had to pull himself together and curse himself sardonically back to reality.

And the reality was stark enough to shock him to his senses. He had only to show himself to one of those alien women to set all her alien brothers combing the island for him with death in their hands. The thought of it washed away all desire, all longing, just as the fact of the Japanese having women with them washed away whatever thoughts he'd held of immediate rescue. He went back to Sister Angela heavy with the new aspect of their position.

"Perhaps," the nun suggested, when he told her of his discovery and of his interpretation of its meaning for them—"perhaps they are nurses. Maybe it's a hospital—or a convalescent base—they have here."

"No hospital," Allison said. "I'd have seen it down there. No convalescents. They ain't nurses, Sister."

He let her assume for herself what purpose other than nursing the women might serve.

"What it means," he added, "is we got to be mighty careful. More careful than ever. We just got to lie low by day; do our walking about at night. Longer they stay, more they'll start wandering about the place. Beats me why they haven't been over it foot by foot before this. It's what the Marines would have done."

"Strangely enough," said Sister Angela pensively. "It gives me some small comfort to think about other women near me, even though I can't speak with them."

"Look," he said startled, "don't you get no ideas them women could do anything for you if you got nabbed. Them Japs don't give their women no say at all. Don't you never forget they're enemies, all of them!"

She sighed. "Enemies? Yes. Made so by men who have forgotten God. But we are not enemies in His sight, only weak, foolish, quarrelling, sinful children. Only because somebody has ordered it so are those women and me enemies. In our hearts we aren't enemies. We—"

He interrupted her. "Don't you fall for that stuff. If you'd seen what my outfit seen, after we got cut off in the Philippines, you wouldn't talk like that. Give that stuff away, Sister. It don't make no sense; no sense at all."

His voice was sharp with sternness. For him there was no thought of temporising about it, no thought other than that the Japanese were enemies, men and women both, and that if he and they met it was kill or be killed.

Allison was feeling the strain of this long isolation, with its constant

danger and need for watchfulness, its constant fear of discovery. He sensed that in order to maintain his determination he must keep flaming his hatred of the enemy. He had done more thinking in the past weeks than ever before in his life; he had discovered more things about himself than he had hitherto dreamed of.

He knew that only in hating the Japanese lay his hope of escape and survival, for it was this hatred that spurred his mind and gave him the ingenuity to dodge and trick the enemy.

"That religious stuff is all right," he growled, "when you're in a church or living nice and happy in a convent, or maybe in peacetime anywhere. But it don't go in a war. They got no religion like that in a war and there ain't no room in their heaven for white folks like us. So don't you get no ideas about them Tojo dames."

Sister Angela was silent awhile. Then in a cold, withdrawn tone, she said, "Mr. Allison, I'll obey you in most things, since you are a soldier and we are in peril. But you cannot give me orders about my religion, or my thoughts or opinions. Let us not talk like this again. I don't like it."

"I didn't aim to hurt your feelings none," he said quickly. "O.K. We won't talk about it no more. But just you don't nurse them sort of ideas."

Thereafter Allison intensified their precautions. He refused to let the nun leave her foxhole by daylight, and he was doubly careful in his reconnaissance of the Japanese camp. Every day he examined the ground closely all about their retreat, looking for signs of alien passage and for any tell-tale marks of their own journeys. The rains held off in an unreasonable manner, and Allison was glad of the procession of bright, hot, dry days. He knew that the rains would bring everlasting and enervating moisture, damp heat, mosquitoes, the risk of fever. Mosquitoes troubled them sometimes at night and he was scared of malaria. He had heard or read somewhere of natives smearing themselves with mud as a protection, and every night he and the nun went to the little river and liberally plastered hands and faces with the black river ooze, allowing it to dry and cake on the skin, and washing it off in the dawn before retreating to their foxholes for sleep. It was most uncomfortable and irritating at first, but they became somewhat used to it in time.

They continued their habit of eating well at dawn and taking a smaller meal of jungle fruits at evening. He continued to take fish on the west coast after dark, and these the Sister cooked, using rice or yams with them as their palates suggested. Their diet had not yet become monotonous, especially since they could vary it with an occasional meal of canned meat and remember that they had earlier been on the verge of starvation.

UP to this time there were no signs in either of them of that deterioration in personal habits or character which such a life might have produced in people less moulded by discipline.

In the Marine the effects of military discipline was so far unimpaired; in the nun the effects of a different, though no less strong, discipline were as pronounced.

To Sister Angela, though she missed the austere comforts to which she had been accustomed, there was no sense of being alone as a lay woman would have been alone. She enjoyed a spiritual companionship and consolation which the Marine didn't know, and though she frequently longed for the physical presence and day-to-day talk of her sisters in devotion, her mind was so disciplined or canalised on its one devotional line that she was almost unaware of the passage of the days, as units of time, and she regarded this present interruption in her usually toll-filled and placid life as no

more than an interlude which would end in God's good time.

It had for her no actual beginning, being a continuance of the way she believed God was ordained for her, and though she anticipated rescue she placed no measurement on its appearance. It would come and be part of her life as all the days gone by were part of it.

Beside her, waking and sleeping, praying and waiting, walking by night or as she watched by day, as real to her as the Marine and the jungle and the sky were the august spirits of the Virgin and her Miraculous Son, and around them hovered the hosts of heaven. She, therefore, feared nothing, least of all death. If death came it would be merely a transition, merely another mild change in the way of her soul's life, and if anything it would bring her closer to the precious Beings she served. She was soled in this lonely, forgotten isle, amid the hardship and danger, by the same holy mysteries that had soled her in her Canadian convent, and would have soled her were she back there now.

To her Allison was no more than a chance companion; one with whom, in order to serve whatever purpose God proposed for her, it was necessary that for a little while she should share food and companionship and a common danger of physical pain. There was no question of his masculinity nor of her own femininity. They were simply two human beings, beloved of God, for the moment brought together in the course of their individual destiny.

That he was male and she female meant nothing to Sister Angela, for to her bodies were nothing more than articles in which the soul lived during its earthly sojourn, and when its earthly purpose was served it left its home of clay and returned to heaven, leaving the useless body to the earth.

Her religious discipline had long since taught her how to deal with those speculations which had troubled her as a young girl; long since the natural desires of the female had been sublimated into the service of her Master, Sister Angela was the metal of the true nun, single-minded in her devotion and rigidly impervious to the assaults of what she regarded as her baser nature, inherited from the fallen Eve.

She knew what creation meant, whether achieved by God or man, and the achievements of man to her were the visible signs of the glory of God. Greater and more mundane and sceptical minds than hers have stood enthralled at the miracle of a baby and the emergence of a moth from the chrysalis. These things were, as were the acts that caused them to be, and one accepted them as one accepted the sun or the sky or the fact of being alive; as one accepted the celibacy of her sisterhood to become a bride of the Church. And always before her was the great and shining precept of the Virgin—a miracle that far outshone all earthly miracles.

At first the nun had been to Allison a woman apart from other women; wrapped in her sacred mysteries she had been as far removed from speculations of a sexual nature as a star. Later, isolation and constant companionship had watered down the mystery and he had begun to speculate about her. But he had resolutely fought his thoughts and driven the unwanted ones away, horrified to find his mind wandering around the nun's holy defenses.

Events had conspired against him. Racing to her with the news of the Japanese landing that day, he had seen her unclothed back as she bathed in the river. His memory had registered the picture and he could not erase it. It came in the night and plagued him, and sometimes he had yielded and taken the picture out of his memory and played with it, as a boy might secretly play with a forbidden toy. Always had come revulsion, and self-loathing, and determined forcing of his thoughts into safer channels.

But he knew that the profane thoughts waited, circling stealthily, as it were, beyond the rim of his consciousness, only waiting an unguarded moment of relaxation or boredom to break through and plague him until driven out again by his will.

To him the nun had become a kind of dual personality. There was the woman, and between him and the woman there was the nun, and he did his level best to respect the nun and mostly succeeded, so that for the most part he kept the woman from his thoughts and knew only the nun.

There had been, in his attitude towards Sister Angela, a small element of fear, fear of the unknown. It was queerly mixed with his awe of her and his respect for her and what she represented, with his new curiosity as to her way of life and with an affection that had arisen out of his association with her and his responsibility for her in this desperate situation.

But from the day he saw the Japanese women bathing there was a change. He was never aware of its beginning or even of its presence. It seeped gradually into his mind and emotions without shock or violence. The old saying that "familiarity breeds contempt" was working here, since his close association with Sister Angela all this time had revealed her to be, after all, a woman as well as a nun in the sense that she had to eat and drink, and could feel weariness, and be exasperated and worried, and needed to bathe and sleep and be warned and advised and consulted like any normal person.

Visions of the naked Japanese girl stretching her plump body on the river-bank came to him in the night and when he lay trying to sleep in the day. Yet set him afire. He knew the hopelessness of his desire and tried to quieten it, but memory and darkness and tropic heat combined to defeat him. When he fell asleep it was but to exchange the ordered visions of conscious thought for wild, exciting and exhausting adventures of the subconscious.

IT was in these subconscious dreams that Sister Angela began to appear.

Three in a week he dreamed that he walked alone down a long, turning corridor towards a distant door. At the door he would have trouble with the latch and be fretful with a fear that he couldn't manage it, but succeeded and passed into a red-walled room without floor or roof.

The tops of each of the four walls were decorated with round cannon balls which he identified as having come from an old fort in Manila. In the middle of the room was a couch on which a young woman reclined. She was clad in a long, white, Grecian-like gown which left arms, shoulders and back bare. He would stand by the door, desperately trying to recognise her, but always she kept her face hidden. He would advance across the floorless space, floating as it were, and stand by the couch, all eagerness and excitement. Then the dream woman would turn languorously on to her back and slowly put her hands over her face so that all he could see would be her eyes, expectant and rather roguish, watching him.

He would bend and take her hands and try to remove them from her face so that he could kiss her, but always she would resist him and he would find himself in that strange, powerless state of dreams. He would let her hands be and fall to kissing her shoulders, feeling them alive and hot under his lips.

Then there would be a disturbance and he would hear jeering laughter and look up and see that all the cannon balls had become human heads that nodded sneeringly at him, and at each other. He would step back to shout at them, and then he would awake. And always, on the point of awakening, he could see that the woman was Sister Angela.

Who could describe the chaos of

thoughts and emotions aroused in Allison by this sort of thing? Sometimes he resisted sleep, fearing the dream, at others he welcomed it, hoping that the dream would recur. He did what he could to escape, but he was trapped in this lonely spot and sometimes the fight became too much.

The river drew him like a magnet. On his way to spy on the enemy camp he made the roundabout journey that brought him to the old mahogany. One day he saw the Japanese women again, five of them this time, sporting naked in the stream. He had eyes only for the plump little thing he had marked before. She looked no more than eighteen or so, and he perched in his tree and watched her and was aflame with desire.

Suppose he were to rush down there, seize her and carry her off into the jungle? He knew the answer to that.

What if he were to reveal himself to them, careful and without frightening them, and try to make friends? He knew the answer to that.

Could he follow the little one and try to catch her alone? Might she not listen to him? And to that, also, he knew the answer.

Long after the women had gone he stayed there, brooding. The sun beat down on him from the strangely dry skies, birds chattered and shrieked in the jungle about him, beneath him the little river flowed steadily on. A sly thought of Sister Angela crept into his mind and he got hurriedly to his feet and walked back to the foxhole.

He paused in sight of the foxholes, looked long and thoughtfully at the brush that hid Sister Angela, then crinkled up his face, spat sideways, and went on.

At night, as they fished on the west coast, speaking in whispers and sometimes very close together in the darkness, with the air still and the jungle behind them full of noise, while the sea fretted at the rocks and gave back the glint of the stars and the queer, phosphorescent lights of itself, and the mystery and glamor of the night were all about them, he had the greatest trouble to keep his hands from her, to stop himself pressing against her, and to keep out of his voice the betraying note that struggled for utterance.

And when they returned to their foxholes he would be a mixture of disappointed rage and glad relief, and be strangely gruff and abrupt, going to his den like a fretting and disappointed stallion to its stable, there to wrestle again with his thoughts and suffer his dreams.

One morning Allison crept to the jungle fringe above the enemy camp and there was that which drove desire and tormented dreams out of his mind. The tents were down, there was a burning of rubbish dumps, a transport lay at the wharf in the bay a destroyer waited. At sea low down against the horizon, Allison saw warships and merchant vessels, and beyond them the dim bulk of an aircraft-carrier. All were moving southward. In the clear sky above the distant fleet almost invisible spots moved and he recognised them for patrolling aircraft.

In that first startled glance at the new activity of the Japanese below him, and then at the distant fleet, his heart had moved in the momentary belief that the far ships were American. He quickly perceived his mistake.

Below him the enemy force waited little time. Men moved in groups to the wharf, carrying gear while others put aboard the transport; men went aboard and didn't return, soon there was but a handful of men ashore, and the waiting destroyer began to head slowly out to sea.

Allison watched all this, trying to guess at the reasons for their departure. He watched the distant fleet closely, for he half expected to see ships come from it with relief forces. The last three Japanese left ashore walked from the wharf to the bungalow, went inside for a little time, reappeared and went back to the



wharf and on to the ship. Immediately she cast off and swung her head for the sea.

It had all been so unexpected and swift that Allison lay and watched in a stupor of astonishment. The transport ship was well out in the open sea before he grasped the fact that the Japanese were leaving the island; that he and the nun need not hide any more.

At first the knowledge was accompanied by immense relief which amounted to exhilaration. He jumped to his feet and threw up his arms like one suddenly released from bonds. He let out an exuberant shout. Then, as though doubtful, he lowered his arms slowly, puzzled by a feeling of loneliness. He watched the receding ships thoughtfully and gravely, for the island had somehow become rather lonely. He had the feeling that it had shrunk and was insignificant; nobody wanted it, friend or foe, and there was a frightening implication in this that he and the nun might be left there for ever. Then the feeling passed and the relief returned and he hurried to the foxholes, crying, "Sister! Sister! They've gone. The Japs have gone. They've done gone right away."

Her face, pale and startled in the sunlight, appeared through the brush hiding the entrance to her retreat.

"It's true!" he shouted. "They've gone. Every last one of them!"

She began to come out, her eyes on him, plainly trying to see by his face whether or not he was joking or whether he had taken leave of his senses. Her hood caught in a bramble and was pulled back, leaving her head bare. Allison saw that her head was covered with short, thick golden hair like a boy's. Her face, free of the hood and with the short hair clustered on her head, seemed very young to him. She tugged at the hood and freed it and got it back on her head, giving him a little smile of comic embarrassment.

"They've gone!" he repeated.

She got out of the hole and stood up. Her smile widened as she saw that he meant it. He began telling her what he had seen, and what with relief and excitement she had to sit down while he told her.

The first thing they did was to explore the abandoned camp site, discussing the sudden withdrawal of the enemy and speculating on the possible reasons for it.

"Could it mean," she asked, "that our people are pressing them?"

"Could be. I reckon. Seems so. But we ain't seen any planes or heard any guns. If our fellows were on the way here and close enough to make the Japs get out, you'd think we'd have seen something."

**S**ISTER ANGELA said: "They went so very suddenly." "I'm trying to work it out," he replied, thoughtfully. "Some ways it beats me. Maybe there's a big attack coming off somewhere. Maybe it's over. The war, I mean. We got no way of knowing."

He paused. They were standing where the wharf met the land.

"You can't never tell about these moves," he went on. "Maybe them fellows don't know themselves. Soldiers get pushed around a lot in a war, and they got to guess what's going on. You get plenty rumors in an army."

"But what other reason could there be? People don't just pack up and go away for no reason at all."

A thought occurred to him. "Maybe this lot—the lot that's gone—is one of them back-area lots, the sort that don't do no fighting. They spend a war behind the fighters; carry on duties and lines of communication and stuff like that." He spoke with the mild contempt of the combat soldier for such formations. "Maybe this lot's going some place to take over from somebody who's going some place else. Maybe they ain't got anybody to come here right now; maybe there's somebody

on the way here. Maybe there's a bigger lot coming; maybe they could be making this into a base—aw, what the heck! We just got to keep guessing, I guess."

"Yes. But it's strange for them to go like that. Even I feel that it is strange."

"Aw, shucks, Sister. Nothing's strange in a war. Guy never knows what his commander is aiming to do next; what's the sense trying to figure out what the Japanese aim to do. Let's forget it, and see if they left anything behind worth having."

They hadn't, not about the wharf or the broken sheds or where their tents had been. Allison and Sister Angela hunted over the area thoroughly, they poked and probed the still-burning rubbish dumps. All they found was rubbish.

When it came to searching the bungalow, Allison insisted on doing it alone. He had remembered the three Japanese who had paid it a last visit, and he suspected booby traps. He made the nun wait, well clear of the building, telling her to watch sea and sky. The fact that they had not burnt or blown up the bungalow and wharf hinted that they, or another party of them, intended to recapture the island. It was unlike them to leave behind undamaged any structure that might possibly be of use to their enemies.

Pondering this as he went to the bungalow, he recalled the slackness of the discipline of the camp he had spied upon, the lackadaisical guard system, the failure thoroughly to patrol the island or place manned posts about it. He cocked an eye at the wooden sentry tower and recalled how he had got by the sentry when he raided the enemy larder. The conviction grew upon him that the departing force was not troubled by fears of attack; it no more feared attack than it had while encamped on the island. Therefore its departure was no more than a matter of some backline routine and others could reasonably be expected to take its place. The presence of women, too—he sighed momentarily for his lost brown girl of the river—showed that it was no combat force. And the departure, for all its swiftness, was not hurried by any thought of danger. The escorting destroyer was no more than a token escort. It had steamed away to sea ahead of the transport, as though glad to get a routine duty over. Pausing on the bungalow verandah, eyeing the door and studying the floor for trip wires and other signs of traps, Allison concluded that the enemy movement was all part of a leisurely alteration in back area dispositions.

He crept along the hall and from room to room with every sense alert for danger. Presently he stood on the very spot where he had raided the enemy supplies on that never-to-be-forgotten day. There was nothing to raid now. The bungalow was stripped of every movable thing. Allison brooded in the empty room for a moment or so, then went out. Sister Angela saw him emerge and looked at him inquiringly.

"Well," he said, abstractedly, for his mind was still analysing the possible causes of the enemy's departure, "I guess we can move in. Be better than livin' like prairie dogs up in them holes, I guess."

She entered the bungalow and, while he remained on watch outside, she went from room to room, looking about her with interest. She was absurdly like a woman inspecting a new residence that was to let and caught herself eyeing this window or that door and inwardly criticising its position.

Allison gave her time to explore, then he called her outside and pointed to the wooden sentry tower.

"Sister, you reckon you could climb up there?"

She looked at the ladder—cross-pieces nailed to a single pole—and said, doubtfully, "I believe I could. Do you want me to do it?"

"Yep. To keep watch. I'll be right busy. I'll be bring down some chow and things from up there—"

he waved a hand at the hill where the foxholes were—"and we can't take no risks. I want you should go up that tower and watch the sea."

"Of course." She started for the ladder. She gathered her skirts with one hand and began to climb, going slowly from crosspiece to crosspiece and pausing frequently. It came to Allison that she was scared of the climb and of the stability of the ladder, but was determined to go up.

"That's the stuff," he called encouragingly, and left on his journey.

He brought back sufficient food for several days, piled it on the gallery, waved to the watching nun in her eyrie, and went away up the hill.

This time he brought down her iron crucifix, the brass bowls, and sundry odds and ends. He called her down from the tower and showed them to her and said lightly, "Ma'am, you got to prepare your own guest room in this here hotel."

She was delighted to have her pathetic treasures and with his thoughtfulness.

"God bless you, Mr. Allison."

"Aw shucks! I'm going up that tower. I was sort of hoping you might wrangle up some chow. Shoot the works, Sister. We got a new house."

"Oh yes. Yes." She was about to hurry inside, but he stopped her.

"All the trimmings, mind. That stove in there is working and there's fuel. Use what you like. I didn't fetch all the food. Don't am to. If the Japs come back we'll maybe need that cache up in the jungle. Go to it."

He turned to the ladder, she to the kitchen.

**T**HEY ate lingeringly and with cheerfully mocking chatter about the baker failing to call and the scarcity of good steak these days. Afterwards he went on to the gallery and smoked, well content, looking about the clearing, his mind lazy.

A distant boom out at sea brought him erect. He peered anxiously seaward, heard it again, and ran and hurriedly mounted the tower. Sister Angela came out of the bungalow and looked up at him, silent and with one hand at her throat.

To the north-east Allison saw a dark cloud-bank. As he watched, lightning rippled across it. Under the cloud the horizon was marked by a white line. A heavy haze had come between sun and earth so that the sun's light was steely and its heat oppressive. After the lightning came the hollow boom of the thunder and he called down to the anxious nun, "Not guns. A storm. A big one."

Big it was. It rolled in from the sea on a wave of cold air that set Allison shivering in the tower, with vivid and continuous lightning and shattering crashes of thunder, and a wind that set the jungle lashing. Allison came down from the tower to get under cover. It was a night of horror. The electric storm passed quickly, but a minor hurricane blew for an hour or more, and the driving rain spouted from walls and roof. Then the wind passed and took the coolness with it, and a heavy heat came and lay on the world like a blanket, while the rain poured steadily down. All the day it rained and at night they sat in the hot, steamy darkness of the gallery and heard the rain drumming on the iron roof.

Later, sleeping fitfully on the gallery—Sister Angela had taken herself somewhere inside—Allison heard the rain every time he awoke. It depressed him. He was aware that it might continue for days and that it would change their way of living on the island.

"I hope to God," he muttered, "they don't come back in the wet."

Except for the first days of their meeting, in that time before the Japanese came—that time that now seemed so long ago—the weather

had been fine. He knew what the wet would do to the ground and the jungle and the atmosphere. There would be ooze underfoot and moisture would cling to every leaf and stem and drip from them, and the air would be so heavy with it as to make movement a toil. A rank, damp smell would hover over all the island except on the beaches. He wondered whether the foxholes would fill and the food stored there be spoiled. There was nothing he could do about that until morning.

He gave over worrying and dozed again, feeling the wall hard against his back and the sweat running on his body, and all around him the sullen roar of the rain. He slept and woke and slept and woke and fretted most of the night. He was awake, listening to the downpour, when the dawn came.

As the light increased he looked from the gallery at a grey curtain of rain. The ground all about the bungalow was under water and little runnels and tiny creeks had formed and were running their torrents together to form larger ones that ran down to the bay. The rain fell into this water with a low rushing sound distinct from the drumming on the roof.

Allison inhaled moisture with his breath, the wall behind him was moist, minute showers of moisture swept in as the heavy air moved, already the rank smell of the saturated tropics was evident.

Shortly after dawn Sister Angela came wearily from within and stood by the door. She greeted him listlessly and looked morosely at the rain and the sodden jungle beyond.

Her face was beaded with perspiration. Her mouth drooped with the weariness of the night. Allison got heavily to his feet and wiped sweat from his bearded face.

"What I could do with a cup of coffee now," he said, in a poor attempt at cheerfulness.

She looked at him almost with distaste.

"What on earth are we to do now?" she complained. "It may rain for—for ever!"

"Well, we got ourselves a house, anyways," he said, determined to be cheerful.

But she seemed to have lost heart.

"What would we do if they—if the Japanese came back? What would we do—out there?" She swept a sleeved arm at the rain. "How could we go on, out there, in the wet?"

He had thought about the same thing. All he was positive about was that the Japanese had not come back.

"Ever hear about waiting till you get to bridges before you cross 'em?" he asked.

She stared out at the rain for a long moment. Then she turned to him and put her hands on his shoulders, her grey eyes looking up into his face like those of a lost child. He was stirred to see that all her veneer of strength and independence had been stripped away. There was in her whole attitude a plea for help and a confession that he was the one physical refuge to whom she could fly from the dreadful menace of the rain and the alien jungle and their small, small hope of success. And in her candid grey eyes he read the desperate question of her soul. Then her eyes clouded at what she read in his, and tears came, and she relaxed against him, crying wildly, "I'm scared. I'm scared. We'll never be found; never be found!"

He made to put his arms about her, clumsy because of his emotion, and she slid from them and sank to the floor and sat there, all huddled and broken, sobbing and twisting her hands together.

He squatted beside her and awkwardly sought to comfort her. "Leave me alone. Leave me alone," she cried, and twisted away from him and went on weeping heedlessly and copiously.

Nonplussed, he drew back on his heels, frowning at her. He didn't understand that he was witnessing

the breaking of a tension that had lasted for hours, and that she was in that moment totally incomprehensible to any man. Nor could he realise that her tears were the waters of relief.

He thought she was hysterical and he took her by the shoulders and shook her vigorously. At this she leapt up and ran into the bungalow, slamming the door behind her.

The astounded Allison stood looking at the door, then he turned and looked at the rain and crinkled up his face and spat sideways. He was baffled and slightly angry, but too hot and weary to care much.

"What the hell," he muttered. He opened the door and listened. There was nothing save the sound of the rain. He called out to her and she replied, "Leave me alone. Please leave me alone." He remained, undecided, and heard her say, in a low and urgent tone, "Jesus! Son of Mary, pity me and help!"—and he closed the door softly, like an apologetic stranger who has intruded accidentally.

He took off his shirt, his boots and socks, put them together on the gallery, rolled his pants up, and struck out into the rain, having suddenly decided to go to the foxholes to see what was happening there.

The rain fell warm on his naked torso and lower legs as he squelched through the mud and running water of the clearing. He felt the mud squirting through his toes and the rain running down from his quickly matted hair and beard. At first it exhilarated him, giving him a boyish feeling that made him want to sing, but, the moment he entered the jungle, leeches came at him from the ground and low brush. They fastened themselves to him in dozens. He tore them off. He tried to escape them by breaking into a trot. But when he trotted the mud squirted up from his pounding feet and was annoying, and the wet, heavy jungle fronds lashed him. After a short distance he gave up and returned to the bungalow, where he stood in the rain until it washed the mud from him, plucking the last of the leeches from himself and hurling them far into the rain. He dried himself as well as he could with his shirt, feeling the sweat break out on his body as it dried.

He dressed, tucked his pants ends into his socks, gave the closed door a mock salute, and again struck out into the rain.

**H**E was drenched at once, but now the leeches could get only at hands and face, and few reached these parts. The water made his clothing and boots heavy. He plodded on grimly, frequently having to wipe the water from his eyes. The whole hillside was running water and he feared for the foxholes. Sometimes he had the sensation that the world was drowning under rain that had been falling continuously for years and that he was the last man, still struggling upward in search of higher ground. He couldn't remember ever having seen such rain before.

The moist heat and his sodden clothes pressed on him like a weight. Movement was laborious and sharp itches came and went on his body. The sweat under his long hair and beard, both of which were so long and thick that the rain had matted them like a thatch and was running off them, irritated his throat and the hollow at the back of his skull.

Sister Angela's foxhole was practically ruined. Almost half of its sod roof and part of the rear wall had caved in and it was a mess of water and slush. His own hole was intact, though water was seeping into it and was already six inches deep on the floor.

He slid inside and found the walls creeping with damp, with here and there tiny trickles running down to the floor.

The rice had become moist and swollen; the other food and the matches and cigarettes were still undamaged. He put everything into



the sack except a tin of jam and two cans of meat. These he placed carefully in the communication hole between the foxholes, intending them to be a reserve in case of necessity. He rolled the sack around its contents and placed the lot inside his shirt, and carrying the remaining cans of meat in his hands he set off on the return to the bungalow.

The rain continued for so many days that neither Allison nor the nun bothered to keep track of time. He made another trip through it to the ruined foxholes and rescued the remainder of the food. The heat and their inactivity and general lassitude did not induce hunger and they ate sparingly of their dwindling supplies.

Their patience began to wear thin. Allison was easily irritated and Sister Angela alternated between fretfulness and periods of withdrawn and lonely weeping and prayer.

She became shadowy and silent, passing about the empty bungalow. Allison sat or lay or walked about on the gallery by day, sullenly watching and listening to the rain, recklessly burning away his cigarettes. The wet penetrated the house. Floors became squiddy to the tread, damp spots with mildewed edges appeared on the walls. The clothing of the nun and the Marine, worn constantly, was never dry. A multitude of insects plagued them. Allison ripped boards from the back floor to make their cooking fires and found a savage delight in doing it. He carved their names and particulars on a part of the wall with his broken knife, then contrarily tore the boards out and burnt them, sneering, "Nobody would ever find them, anyway."

They had little to say to each other. They ceased to be curious about each other's movements. It seemed that with the passing of any immediate threat from the Japanese, being isolated in this small space in the midst of the teeming rain, and having no foreseeable future, their comradeship had ended. All movement was limited to the bungalow and its immediate vicinity. Beyond that was the wall of the rain, the sodden and inimical jungle with its ooze and its leeches and its heavy heat, and beyond both was the barrier of the sullen sea.

They had no plans to make, no duties to perform, no journeys to undertake. They could not look forward to a time of ending, there was no hope of rescue. Hours, days, nights lost shape or design, there was only the endless rain and the endless enduring.

They stayed there in the bungalow and they ate and slept and lived in a monotony of wet and boredom and depression. And managed to remain healthy.

An accident changed their condition. It occurred at a time when Allison was feeling the first promptings of that antipathy and hatred for his companion which two men, long isolated from their fellows, will begin to feel for each other. If she coughed it annoyed him. He caught himself about to shout at her to stop walking about or about sitting still.

He was leaning against the wall, watching her as she bent wearily over the cooking fire, her back to him. He was about to give voice to the burst of unreasonable anger that surged in him because she was cooking rice again—though there was nothing else to cook—when before his eyes the black cloth of her gown, where it was tight across her shoulders, opened slowly as though pulled apart by invisible fingers, eaten through at last by the damp rot and continuous wear.

Through the seam that opened slowly he saw the satiny gleam of her white skin. It was like a light in deep darkness. The sight struck through his torpid anger and into his dulled mind like a sudden bell. His eyes expanded. The blood began to thunder anew through his veins. Excitement shortened his breathing and dried his throat. He leaned forward, his eyes feasting on that small strip of white flesh, his hands eager to tear the rotting robe apart. Then

the nun straightened herself and faced him and their eyes met.

Allison saw the weariness and apathy vanish from her face. It came alive. She stared at him in puzzlement that slowly changed to wondering alarm. Then, before her mind and instinct—that instinct so long buried under religious devotion—could discover the meaning of that which blazed in Allison's eyes, he recovered himself, averted his gaze from hers with a distinct effort, and somehow got himself in check.

"What is it?" she asked. "Why did you look at me like that? What is it? Did you hear something?"

She took a step back from him, uncertain, troubled, trying to analyze her alarm, almost but not quite at the point of revelation. "Mr. Allison, I—you—you scare me. You—"

He suddenly whirled about and rushed from the room, leaving her there with open mouth and an affrighted mind. Sister Angela remained so for a moment, then she went to the door and looked after him. The passage was empty, and beyond it, through the open door, was nothing but the rain. She frowned in bewilderment, her mind striving to grasp the significance of the expression she had surprised on his face, but losing it because he had snatched his face away from her too quickly—it was as though she groped after a swiftly vanishing thought.

SHE lifted a hand to the doorpost in the act of turning back to the stove, and her thoughts changed abruptly as she felt a sensation of something giving way across her back. She reached round and discovered the rent in her robe, doubting her sense of touch at first, then rapidly exploring the area with dismayed fingers.

Dismay gave way to annoyance as she moved to a window for better light and twisted herself round to see the damage. She discovered by this how frail the fabric had become, hastily stopping herself as she felt the rent grow wider. She stood there, momentarily appalled by the knowledge that she had nothing else to wear.

She looked at the front of her robe, keeping her hands still. She looked slowly, helplessly about the room, as though unable to believe that there was nothing with which to cover herself. Her hand came slowly up to her cheek in the immemorial gesture of a woman in thought.

Presently she reached a decision. She looked through the house for Allison, then went to the verandah in search of him. The rain had ceased, but the monsoon clouds hung low and thick, and the air was heavy with damp heat. Earth and jungle steamed in the warm grey light. Allison was not to be seen. She called to him several times, hoping that he would not answer. She did not want him near her just now.

She withdrew, when he did not answer, to a room, closed the door and took off her robe. In her plain linen underwear she examined the robe closely, seeking a means of repairing the damage or of overcoming the failure of the fabric. She was without needle or thread, or pins, or extra material. Then she remembered their fishing line and wondered whether Allison had saved it from the flooded foxhole. She would have to make do as best she could, and be very careful of her movements, and she would ask him about the fishing line when he returned.

Meantime Allison walked along the shore above the beach where he had landed on the island. The sand was sodden and hard from the rains, above him the dark clouds hung ominously, to his left stood the rank jungle bathed in its steamy heat, to his right the sea rolled and fretted, the white caps dirty with yellow sord and the near water murky from the island floods.

Terns wheeled offshore with their strange, harsh cries so fitting to the disturbed seas; somewhere up in the

jungle a bird called with a high-pitched, monotonous note. The air was foetid with the rank smell of wet earth and wet vegetation.

Allison was scarcely aware of his surroundings. He strode along with his eyes on the sand in front of him, his shoulders hunched, his hands in his pockets. His brown, bearded face was flushed, his eyes unnaturally bright, his tongue ran fitfully over his lips.

All his eyes saw was the white flesh through the black robe, all his thought was of the body of the woman in the robe. Intact, that black garment was as inviolate as steel, but with the rent its inviolability was suddenly destroyed; it was no more than a piece of rotting rag between him and the woman. He had rushed from the bungalow because that sudden flame of desire had alarmed him.

His brain, in the few moments that it had retained command of his emotions, had shouted a warning and he had obeyed.

He had run madly at first, like one racing away from a trap, from some fearful thing that his body wanted to do but which his mind revolted against. Then, as he had slowed from his run, his desire had flamed again and now he was aware with it, walking aimlessly, the animal in him gloatingly awaiting the moment when he would turn and go back, looking forward to that turning with blazing anticipation.

He swung about and headed back to the bungalow, not hurrying, not feeling any need for hurry, for the feast was there and all he had to do was go and take it. The dusk gathered about him as he walked and the rain began again.

Sister Angela had managed to ruck up the robe to hide the rent, so that its length was shortened and her ankles in their black stockings were exposed. She was standing by the door as he came on to the gallery and he saw her plain, flat-heeled shoes and her slim ankles black in the gloom.

She peered at him through this gloom, trying to read his face, and when she saw the flash of his smile it relieved her so that she smiled in return. It was too dark for her to see any more than the dim shape of his face and flash of his teeth. He stepped to her, put up his hands and pushed the hood from her head, grasped her strongly in his arms and kissed her lips, pressing his mouth hard against hers.

For an instant she was paralysed. He mistook it for compliance and lifted his mouth. Then she reacted with such violence that he couldn't hold her. She cried out wildly and rushed into the house. Allison didn't run after her. He stood waiting, not without a feeling of amusement. There was nowhere she could go.

Where could she go? He laughed, and moved slowly through the door, calling, "Don't run away, little one. That's no good. Don't be scared. It's only me."

Her voice came out of the darkness, shrill with fear and disbelief. She couldn't face what her instinct told her was the truth. "Why did you do that? I—I—are you fooling? You aren't sick? I can't believe—oh, what is wrong, Holy Mother of God, what is wrong?"

"No, sweetheart," he answered, softly and caressingly. "No, I ain't sick."

He moved into the house. The frantic woman crouched in the darkness, hearing him come. His tread sounded like the tramp of elephants, beating into her brain.

"Mother of God," she screamed. "Help me!"

She was on her knees, her hands clasped in supplication. Suddenly her panic passed and she was calm. She prayed silently and kept on praying for help as she felt him drawing near. She put her hands over her eyes and with a last gasping prayer for help felt the floor sway beneath her.

And help came. For when Allison's hot, searching hands found her in the dark room she lay in a dead faint.

The feel of her limpness, her fail-

ure to respond in any way to his touch, shocked Allison into a momentary pause. Curiously he pushed and prodded her, then desisted and crouched uncertainly in the darkness.

"Don't sham," he growled suddenly. He grinned in the darkness as he pinched her. When she didn't flinch he pinched her again, more severely. Then he found her face and raised it up, and kissed her. She lay as one dead. He put her down and sat back on his haunches and swore with disappointment.

"Too sudden, Hank," he growled. "A woman like her. Too sudden."

He gathered her up and carried her to the gallery with some idea of holding her face out in the rain. She felt so small and light and helpless in his arms that a small wave of tenderness cooled his blood.

As he reached the gallery, and his ears, hitherto dead to anything but desire, heard the rain, there came to his memory that first time he had found her, on the steps of the palm-thatched church by the little river, and of her frank trust and friendship for him, and suddenly he was guilty and ashamed.

He lowered her gently to the boards and placed her comfortably with her back to the wall, slapping her face lightly and chafing her wrists.

"Oh, Christ," he muttered, without profanity, "what sort of a swine am I?"

Sister Angela sighed, shuddered violently, and sat up, giving a little cry of fear and loneliness, for she was confused and momentarily back in her childhood, waking from a bad dream. Her hands clutched him as they would have clutched her mother or her father as a little girl.

"Please don't leave me," she gasped, and shuddered again.

It cut the decent heart of Allison like a knife. Between tenderness for her and anguish of self-accusation he was tongue-tied. He crouched there with one arm about her trembling shoulders, patting her awkwardly and feeling her sobs as a man feels punches on a wounded spot. And around them the black night poured down its floods of rain.

PRESENTLY Sister Angela was no longer the small, frightened girl awakened from a horrid dream. She was the nun, horrified by what had occurred, shrinking from contact with this man, anxious only to be alone with her disquiet and her prayers and her gratitude to her spiritual guardians.

Without a word she arose quickly and went inside. He remained where he was, staring into the blackness and listening to the rush of the rain. The emotional turmoil had exhausted him. He had a dreary, let-down feeling and sat there apathetically, his mind almost blank of thought.

Presently he stretched out, heedless of the hard boards under him, aware only of the heat and the itch of the sweat on him and his tiredness. He slept. So did his desire—for the time.

In the morning he faced something entirely unexpected. When he arose from the gallery and went down to the sea to bathe he was tired. The swim failed to cheer him. He was in a mood between sullen rebellion and contrition.

He would have responded to a forgiving word from the nun as a small boy responds to a smile after a severe scolding, when he knows he has been naughty and fears the length of his mother's displeasure. When Allison returned to the bungalow from the swim, he nerved himself to face Sister Angela, expecting her to look coldly and distastefully upon him, ready to show his regret and contrition for what had occurred.

He thought he had conquered himself and that she need no longer fear him. He came to the bungalow eagerly and yet reluctantly, ready to have it over.

She would neither speak to him

nor show herself. She had shut herself into a room and beyond letting him know she was there, would make no sign.

He sought to reassure her. "You got no need to be frightened of me. That's over. I was crazy. I guess. Don't know what got into me. I could shoot myself, way I feel about it. If apologising will make it right I'm apologising all the way. I'd do anything to make it right, Sister, you got to let me make it right."

Silence. He looked at the closed door. This was worse than all the upbraiding she might have indulged in. It had in it an appalling conviction of loss, as though she had gone away for ever and left him alone in his guilt. He turned from the closed door and went miserably out and sat or walked about.

Presently he returned and tried again, in vain. He found some canned meal and ate it. Once more he addressed the door.

"If you'd only give a man a chance to make it right."

This time she answered, her voice muffled. "Please leave me alone. Go away. Go away."

There rushed upon him a temptation to force the door and make her listen, but he resisted it and, in the reaction from it, he hurried out and went off into the jungle, where he spent most of the day, returning at evening to find the door closed and her seclusion as rigid as ever.

He flung himself down on the gallery boards and moodily watched the night sweep down, wondering how long this sort of thing would continue.

He could not know that her retirement had little to do with him. He could not know that she spent the entire day and most of the night on her knees in that room, suffering a self-imposed fast and doing a penance in the hope of cleansing herself from the touch of his lips and the evil that had reached out for her. His brief assault was to her as is rape to a laywoman.

She felt herself in agony of fear that she might unknowingly have sinned frightfully in not having avoided this desecrating contact, she fasted and prayed for forgiveness, believing that in her voluntary penance lay her only hope.

This point of view arose from the shattering knowledge that she had suffered the besmirching touch of the man in spite of her belief in the all-protecting guardianship of St. Ursula and the Mother of Jesus. This guardianship, she believed, had been relaxed because of some fault of her own.

At first she had tried to find the fault, asking herself if it lay in her forgetting the vigils and routine duties of the Ursulines, as she had done with the passage of time on the island. The first lapses had worried her, but what with hardship and danger, and the absence of the usual incentives to discipline, she had gradually ceased to be troubled and had given up trying to remember her duties. Was it for this she had been sharply thrust into a newer danger?

Or was it because she had become too concerned about food and water and bodily comfort? Or because she had come to depend overmuch on the man, Allison, rather than on her spiritual mentors?

She could find no answer to these and other questions, and so she did her penance and maintained her retreat in the room, offering up a queer mixture of prayers for forgiveness for herself, for Allison, for the Japanese, and vows of conduct, and entreaties for guidance. In the end, reduced almost to hysteria, she fell into an exhausted sleep.

When she awoke she had regained some of her balance and she decided she would go forth and do what had to be done, making no plans, obeying only the inner voice that she now felt ordered her will.

Dawn brought a clear sky, but the heat remained heavy and enervat-



ing. Allison went down to the sea, bathed, and returned. Sister Angela, silent and preoccupied, prepared a mess of canned meat and somewhat mouldy rice. Neither would meet the other's eyes; there was too much between them to talk.

A slow anger, born of the heat, irritation, his thwarted desires and his conviction that her silence accused him, mounted in Allison. He became aware that he wanted to hurt her. He tried to control himself and offered a sort of apology by saying, "The rain's stopped. Maybe we could get out—take a walk or—something."

A wiser woman—that is, a woman more familiar with male psychology—would have accepted it; would have seen that with a man like Allison the best thing would be to humor him, to refrain from reminding him of his offence. But Sister Angela could hardly be expected to display such wisdom. Under the cold front she opposed to him her emotions were a chaos of loathing and fear; she was on a thin edge between sanity and panic, and only her determination to make him realize the utter enormity of his crime kept her mind balanced.

In response to his offer she replied, coldly, "No."

He tried again.

"Maybe we should go catch us some fish."

"You may go."

He was being cast out and he knew it and resented it.

He burst out, "You aim to stay inside and rot!"

At that she looked at him with her candid grey eyes.

"Please don't concern yourself. It would be better if you ignored me," she said.

An imp of anger prompted him to taunt her with "Maybe if you hadn't fainted last night you wouldn't want me to ignore you."

She was far too unworried to grasp the significance of that, but she understood that there was a taunt and an evil inference in it. He saw her face flame and then pale.

"What," she asked, coldly determined now to have it out with him, "is the punishment for an enlisted man found guilty of sacrilege?"

"Sacrilege! I don't get that!" He was frankly puzzled.

**S**ISTER ANGELA faced him, her eyes wide and her face austere.

"I believe there are civil laws for the protection of sacred things," she said. "In Canada, anyone who damages a church or destroys holy articles is punished by the law. I should imagine the punishment would be very severe for a soldier."

He was struggling to understand this, had almost grasped the meaning of it, when she made the mistake of adding, "No Catholic soldier would have done what you have done."

That stung his self-esteem and whipped his anger anew. He burst out savagely, "I reckon I know some Catholic soldiers—and sailors, too, and they wasn't no angels. Not when it come to women. I seen 'em go with women I wouldn't touch with a bayonet on a logging pole. I'm no preaching saint, never claimed to be. Maybe a saint could live in this God-forsaken island and keep on being a saint. I wouldn't know about that. I know I done wrong, but I ain't going round squealing to God about it. And don't give me no cracks about Catholic soldiers. They ain't no better than me." He choked on his anger and fell silent, glaring at her.

She was silent, too, taken aback by anger where she had looked for contrition.

A man's a man, that's all I know!" he flung out, and with this cryptic utterance he turned and went out.

Sister Angela stood awhile, the color going and coming in her face.

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She bit her lip, looking after him with a queer mixture of indignation and bewilderment. Then her face slowly lost its hardness and haughtiness, and became sad. Her mouth quivered, she looked about her with suffused eyes, and in her worn and wrinkled habit she went slowly to her knees to pray.

Allison tramped with stolid fury through the steaming jungle, cursing the leeches and the heat and his misery, and spent most of the day on the western shores, fishing and wandering about. And the flame of his desire awoke again and burned steadily.

Sister Angela, spiritually reinvigorated from her prayers, had spent some time in contemplation of what had occurred between herself and Allison, trying to understand its meaning and its effect on their future relationship.

That relationship must go on, for a time at least, since there was nowhere she could go and nobody to whom to look. Allison was there on the island and if she were to remain with him and be safe from him, much would depend on her own sagacity as well as on her faith in the guardianship of the Holy Mother. Because she wanted to believe so she quickly came to believe that his passion had been but a passing thing.

She built her hope on this belief and thought about it led her to the conviction that he had gone off in remorse and penitence. She had a mental picture of him somewhere in the island, alone and suffering for his sin. This attracted her and presently she was convinced of its truth.

When he returned, she decided, he would be purged and contrite, and she would receive him with friendliness and treat the incident as something bad that was now over and done with and was to be forgotten by both of them as quickly as possible.

What did she know of desire and the inevitable results of isolation and propinquity? How could she know that the life they led, the passage of time, the nature of the young man, all conspired against her?

She couldn't be expected to realize that this kind of existence, where the man had to think and fight for both of them, where there were no symbols of authority nor any reminders of them except what his memory retained, was bound to free the man from the shackles of civilized order.

The restraining power of streets, houses, other people, comrades, law—all the mighty impulses that keep millions obedient to rules and conventions while they live and move among their fellows—this was gone. It takes a very highly intelligent and austere man to retain his civilized bearing when he is living like a savage, ruler of himself and his surroundings, responsible to nobody save himself for his conduct.

Apart from his intelligence, austerity had never been a part of Allison's life. All that had preserved Sister Angela until now from the sudden onrushes of passion that beset him was her holy mystery.

On this and his awe of and reverence for her calling had hitherto rested her immunity from the male in him. But constant companionship had practically dissipated his earlier awe of her—she had gradually ceased to be the nun and become the woman. Reverence remained, but it was likely to be overwhelmed by more primitive emotions. And her mystery had gradually lost, in his eyes, its aura of sanctity. It had become provocative; it challenged him to penetrate it.

There they were: The nun in the bungalow and the soldier coming across the island to her. The nun with her innocence of men and her supreme faith in God; with her mild and trusting heart and her conviction that she was a bride of the Church and that her destiny was in Holy Hands and that she would pass from sphere to sphere,

not by any human agency, but only as God ordained. Hers was not to question or doubt or be fearful, but simply to serve and be faithful. She was a witness in that wilderness of the grandeur and love of her Redeemer.

Allison was sustained by no such faith. His hope of rescue was a matter of how soon the U.S. Navy would find him, nothing more. He had no idea where that Navy was or what it was doing. He gave that matter no thought. He knew it was somewhere on the sea and that it was fighting, and some day it would locate him and get him out of there—if the enemy didn't find him first.

Before Allison, therefore, stretched a blank interval between him and the day of rescue. He had no plans for the future and scarcely speculated upon it. All he could do was try to stay alive, try to keep out of enemy hands, try not to go crazy before the indefinite day of rescue. He had no sustaining philosophy upon which to retreat and wait. All he had were daylight and darkness, the minatory jungle, the cursed rain, and his animal appetites.

**I**N the bungalow, towards which he now made his way in the tropic, steamy, feverish dusk, was a young woman who, to him, merely happened to be wearing the robes of a nun.

She met him at the door, and cried, "I thought you were never coming. Did you catch fish?"

"Sure," he replied, holding the fish out to her. Another woman would have noticed the over-heariness of his voice; she didn't. Another woman might have observed a slyness about him; she didn't. "Sure," he said again. "They're cleaned and ready. They won't keep the night. You got a fire?"

"It's been waiting." She was suddenly happy; here was the old, trusty comrade of the foxholes, come back in answer to her prayers. The quick tropical night was on them before they finished the meal. The rain had died down to an intermittent drizzle. From the jungle came the sounds of its nocturnal life.

Allison, sitting on the floor with his back to the wall, took long pulls at his cigarette, conscious of the woman close to him in the hot darkness, trying to rein in his rising excitement. His ears were strained to hear her slightest movement. His eyes strained to make out her shape in the gloom.

"I wonder," she said thoughtfully, "how long we've been here?"

Allison replied, slowly, trying to think it out, anxious to please her. "Let's see, it musta been about—about May tenth—yep, I reckon it was the tenth because we'd been out five days when we run on to that boat and put to sea." He paused in recollection. "We was at sea two nights—it was the third night when she got it. I reckon it was the middle of May when I was thrum ashore here."

There was a momentary silence.

"Gee," he said, "we must be in August now."

"August," she murmured, in a far-away voice. He heard her sigh and murmur two or three words to herself.

He put the cigarette end on the floor and blotted it out with his boot. Her nearness to him was like a pain.

"Are you comfortable?" he asked. "Yes, thank you." She laughed a little. "I'm getting used to the floor, I suppose."

"Would you like to—lean on me? Rest your head?"

"Oh, no. Thank you, I'm quite comfortable."

He reached out quickly with his right hand and found her arm. His hand followed it to her hand and his fingers closed over hers. He felt her trying to tug her hand free, heard her saying something, "Sister, Sister. I won't hurt you."

"Listen to me! Listen!" he said urgently.

She struggled, crying, "Let me go! You must let me go."

"No. You gotta listen. I'll make you listen!"

Suddenly she was still. He felt her trembling under his hands.

"All right," she said calmly.

He tried to draw her to him, but she resisted so firmly that he was afraid she would begin struggling again and he would lose what he believed he had gained. He kept hold of her hand and let his other hand rest on her shoulder.

"What's the use of acting like this?" he said, in a wheedling tone. "What's the use of pretending you don't—you don't—Come here and let me hold you."

"No," she said. It was almost a shriek. He felt a shudder run through her and tightened his grip to stop her pulling away from him.

"Who would know?" he crooned. "There's only us two. Who would know?"

She became quiet. Allison thought she was thinking over his words, that it was a preliminary to acquiescence. But she was rallying her powers.

"You would know," she said, emphasising the pronoun.

"I'll say I'd know. And so will you."

"And God!"

There was no room in him for God.

"Don't gimme that. If there's a God, he's forgotten us."

"No!" She tried to draw away, but he held her. "God does not forget," she went on. "Please let me go."

"Who would know? Even if we ever get out o' this, who would know?"

"Mr. Allison, don't you understand? You would know—for ever."

She was suddenly fully aware of her situation and she was praying with silent lips, sitting there under his grasp.

"Look," he went on, his voice warm and caressing. "We can easy die here, get that! And nobody ever know what happened to us. That's the way it is. Well, let's get what we can while we can. Even if we get out of it nobody need ever know."

"You keep saying that," she cried, finding her voice. "You keep saying that. But we would know; both of us! We! Don't you appreciate that? We would know, for ever!"

"Say, would you report me, if we got out of here? Would you tell them about it? It'd only be your word for it. You wouldn't do it."

"I didn't mean that. That's not what I mean. I mean—"

"Look I can do what I want and still nobody would know, and if we look like getting out of it what's to stop me killing you. Who would know then?"

She was shocked into silence.

Allison said, "Why make it hard? I wouldn't do anything like that if you was nice to me."

She tried to drive home her argument.

"Whatever you did, you would know, whether I lived or died, whether I told or not."

"I might be dead my own self in a week or two; what would it matter then?"

"Dead or alive, you would know. Your body might die, but you—your soul—you would go on living and your soul would go on knowing for ever and ever, in purgatory or in hell you would go on knowing." She tried to drive her meaning into him.

He was silent, and she added, slowly, "I would not like to be you, if that happened."

He didn't speak or move. She tried to read his mind by the grip of his hand on her, but there was no slackening or change of the grip.

"Aw, shucks!" he said, and his hands increased their grip. She uttered a short, terrible cry of appeal and terror. It made him pause for an instant and in that instant she had an access of strength so great that she threw him from her.

Before he could recover she had squirmed away, got to her feet and went running blindly from the bungalow.

He ran after her. But she sped from the gallery into the night and he lost sight of her. He heard her running, but he could only follow her by ear and his own steps defeated him, forcing him to stop frequently and listen for her. Her fugitive sounds led him down towards the ruined wharf and its battered and deserted sheds. Near the wharf he paused, suddenly aware that the rain had stopped and that he could no longer hear the running woman.

"Hey!" he called, and listened.

There was no sound save that of the sea. He walked slowly forward, listening intently. It came to him that she was hiding by the wharf or among the ruined sheds. Presently he found himself at the landward end of the wharf. He tried to see into the heavy darkness. It seemed to him to be impregnated with the personality of Sister Angela, but he could not see her.

"Hey!" he cried, and listened. Only the sea answered. Allison went carefully out on to the wharf, his feet feeling the planks in the darkness.

Anxiety was cooling his passion. Might she have rushed into the sea? Might she be below him, dead in the waters, washing heavily to and fro on the shore's rim? He stood for a moment, shaken by a pang of self-accusation and a sense of impending loss.

He shuffled forward, and again paused, irresolute and deeply moved. And in the silence he heard her, close ahead in the night.

"Mother, take me to your arms. Mother, take me to your arms."

It went on and on.

**A**LLISON stood there, stricken. It was as though a great weight held him fixed to the spot. He heard his heart pounding as though it sought to punch its way out of his body. It seemed that a mighty force held him powerless, forcing him to listen; his nerves shrieked with the knowledge that he was standing alone. A dreadful finger of fear touched his pounding heart. His legs were like water, and the last vestiges of desire ran out of him like water. Before him Sister Angela's prayer had become a moaning babble. As his heart steadied and his jaw tightened, he bent and spoke to her, keeping his voice gentle, trying to reassure her. She cried out wildly and began to babble more rapidly. He knelt and put out a searching hand which found her face. Her head was turning from side to side, and the skin of her cheeks and forehead was like fire.

Allison knew that burning. He had touched comrades who burned like that. He lifted the feverish, delirious woman in his arms, astounded to find her so light, and carried her back to the bungalow. About him phosphorescent fungi glowed in the night like pale, watching eyes.

Allison had seen fever among his comrades in the Philippines and to him all fevers were alike. He had no way of identifying that which afflicted the nun. Perhaps this was just as well. After he put her down inside the bungalow he went outside and sat on the gallery and thought it over, hearing her in-sensible moaning all the time. He was without medicine and without medical skill.

At first he sat and looked at the night and thought there was nothing he could do. Then he recalled certain fundamental things that had been drilled into him during his training for service in the tropics. Things like fever burning up the moisture in the body and the need to replace it; things like making sure the drinking water was boiled; things about cleanliness. He listened to the nun's raving and sucked in his lower lip, feeling his impotence.

Presently he reached that stage where his mind passed the hope-



lessness of it and began to consider what could be done. Strength came to him and he overcame his weakness and the natural shrinking from unpleasant duties. There were things to be done and only he to do them. He stood up and pulled at an ear, frowning, then he glanced briefly at the night, as though farwelling it, and went inside to set about nursing the sick woman.

For days she alternated between delirium and coma. She vomited badly at first, but it stopped soon after he got boiled water into her stomach. The delirium lessened as her periods of coma lengthened. More than once he was sure she was dead.

All the time he looked after her, doggedly and repeatedly performing the necessary functions. Her helplessness struck into him deeply, for she had been a strong and independent woman. The Sister Angela he had known had vanished. This person who lay under his care, with her lack-lustre gaze, her slack, fever-ridden body, her face sometimes contracting and her dry lips muttering feebly, was as a little child.

He brought leaves and fronds to cover her and made of them a palisade on which she lay while he washed her clothing as best he could, letting it bleach in the blazing sunshine which had succeeded the rains. Many times he wondered at his luck in the passing of the rains at this time. He became most skilful and gentle in his care of her. Desire had vanished or it had been sublimated into this. He was, in a sense, happy in the task, being a fairly simple and honest soul, and having had this duty thrust upon him he did it with a single-mindedness that excluded other things.

The mysterious and somewhat awesome sacred nun no longer existed. Neither did the woman he had desired. In place of both was this sick child solely dependent on him. A doctor wouldn't have regarded her with more detachment. Sometimes he made a grim game of it—a contest between himself and the sickness. He invested the sickness with a personality, cursing it when it got the upper hand, jeering at and mocking it aloud when the patient seemed better. He offered it bets about the result.

"I'll beat you," he'd mutter. "Ten gets you fifty if you win. What? Ain't game to bet! Want better odds?"

Or, "So you thought you could get away with it, huh! Sneaking up in the night, huh! Thought I was asleep, did you. Lemme tell you I don't sleep. Get that!"

**P**RESENTLY, either by good fortune, Allison's care, or her own strength, or by combination of all three—or, if you wish, because God's purpose with her was not yet done—she pulled through; physically, at least. She was a weak, pitiful remnant of the woman she had been, but she survived.

At sunset one day Allison stepped into the room where she lay on her bed of leaves. The flush was gone, her eyes—made great and shining by the contrast of her white-drawn face—looked about her curiously. She heard his step and tried to raise her head, but was too weak. When he looked down at her he saw her eyes meet his, slowly comprehend him, then widen in a peculiar stare. She began beating her breast with one hand and a burst of high-pitched, giggling laughter came from her. Allison looked at her silently, then backed away and went and stood on the gallery, staring unseeing at the fast closing dusk.

He now had a well but crazy woman on his hands. There was left of their stores one can of meat, three cigarettes, seven matches, a bit of ginger. He put his hands over his ears to shut out the giggling coming from inside the bungalow.

He had, underneath his concentration on the care of the sick woman,

been sustained by the thought that it must end sooner or later. End in her death or in her recovery. She had not died, she had recovered from the fever, but there was no end because now she was sick in her head. He had not imagined any such development; it left him shaken, as though a prop which had stayed him had been suddenly snatched away.

He could not adjust his mind to it. He stood there, looking stupidly into the night, his mind appalled by the shock, tiredness creeping over him in waves. He had not spared himself and now, in this blankness of mental shock, his weariness was suddenly terrible in nerves and limbs. He swayed a little on his feet and turned about, putting out his hands to feel for the wall in the darkness.

Then he halted abruptly and looked with mild curiosity at the blaze of light about him. He studied it intently for a second or so, trying to understand it. His brain cleared in a flash and his heart bounded as he recognised it as the beam of a searchlight slashing through the night from the bay.

Allison gave a startled yelp and leaped instinctively for cover. From within the doorway he watched the light as it searched the wharf and sheds, rose and examined the jungle at the rear, shortened and came blindingly feeling over the bungalow. He ducked his head and shut his eyes against the glare and, though he knew that only his head was exposed and unlikely to be seen, felt that he stood stark and clear to the searching eyes behind the light. It left the bungalow and swept in rising and falling arcs about the waterfront, probing, searching, halting and moving on. Suddenly it went out, leaving the blackness more intense than before.

Allison had only one thought—Japanese! His tiredness vanished. With his heart threatening to choke him he leapt within the bungalow, gathered up the now silent nun and stumbled forth, running through the mud towards the jungle, trying to keep the bungalow between himself and the ship. Prill as the fever had left her, Sister Angela was still a burden, and he was frightened by his exhaustion as he staggered within the protecting screen of brush and lowered her to the sodden ground.

As he sank down, intending to rest only long enough to regain strength, gun flashes lit the night. Allison saw flashes within the bungalow, heard the reports and felt the concussion. A second salvo struck the building. The shooting ceased and the searchlight flashed out, searching the land. Flame quivered from the bungalow against the night and he saw a billow of primrose-colored smoke belch from a window, vanish and belch again. Flame trembled along the roof and a dull glow began to outline the bungalow, growing as he watched.

A squeak of distress from the nun distracted him. He saw her moving feebly. Stings on his hands and lower legs told him that leeches were at work. He rubbed his hands and ankles fiercely, feeling the swollen things, then he lifted Sister Angela to her feet, and said, "Come. Let's go. We gotta go. We gotta hide."

"La, la, la," she cried, in a reedy voice. "All the candles are alight. You may ring the bells, Sister."

That almost defeated him. Before him the black and sodden jungle, behind him the burning house and the warship full of menace, in his hands a crazy woman. He heaved a great sigh, then spat savagely, made another swipe at the unseen leeches, and somehow found strength to drag the prattling nun through the brush. He could scarcely see a yard before him, but he knew the island so well and his sense of location was so good that he pressed on in confidence of his direction, heading for the river mouth on the western shore, where he hoped to await the dawn.

Before long he was sweating copiously and, as he ploughed through the mud or blundered into the wet jungle growths, half-carrying and half-dragging the nun, he had a thought that he was getting fever

himself. Sometimes he stopped, overcome by the task and their situation and the apparent hopelessness of it, and panic would creep into his mind, creating the belief that he was lost and would never get out of this steaming tangle of mud and jungle and blackness. His limbs ached. He had to fight off a desire to sink into the mud and stay there and go to sleep. He no longer cared about the leeches.

Sister Angela had stopped her muttering and was silent except for an occasional rapid whimper.

Her weight, light though she was, became intolerable. Still he blundered on, or believed he blundered on, staggering and rolling, moving automatically under the drive of his will. Once a sound behind him caused him to stop and listen, rather astonished to think that there could be any other sounds save that of their halting passage. The sound was not repeated (it was the distant roar of the ship's hawse-pipe as she dropped anchor) and he caught hold of the nun and moved on, forgetting it.

The next time he stopped it was to look about him in astonishment, for the day had come and he was walking along Market Street in San Francisco, his warbag on his shoulder and all the people standing still and looking at him with wonder.

He stared back at them, wondering why they looked at him. Then he looked down and saw that he was walking through a river of hot tar that flowed along the pavement.

"Hey, pal," he called to a cop. "Who let all this stuff loose? And why don't nobody sleep round here?"

"I'll stick up the traffic, sailor," the cop answered. "You drop your warbag and sleep right there."

**T**HE cop blew his whistle and waved his hands. Allison gave a huge sigh of relief and dropped the bag and lowered himself into the tar, only it turned to mud and everything was dark again and the mud got in his mouth. He tried to swear, picking himself up with difficulty and feeling round for his bag. Then he realised he had lost Sister Angela and went blundering about in the darkness, calling her in a harsh whisper. His hand found a shoe and he grasped it and held it tightly. He squatted in the mud and held the shoe and laughed. It amused him to be sitting in the mud instead of in tar. Then his senses cleared and he felt for the nun with his hands, finding her limp and unresponsive to his call.

"Well, reckon she's dead, anyways," he grunted, and blacked out.

When he awoke he looked about him. He shivered a little, wide awake and aware of his situation. He felt the pricking of leeches and plunged his hands into the mud and wiped mud harshly about his neck and legs. He felt about until he located the nun, who lay on her back half in and out of a bush. He swept leeches from her face and hands and lower limbs, plastering mud on as much of her as he could. He listened to hear her breathing and when he heard it he sighed, thinking it might have been better were she dead. He got to his feet, stood a moment or so until he could feel strength creeping back into him, then he got her up somehow and draped her unresisting body across his shoulders.

"Maybe she's dying," he thought, and lurched forward. Thrice more he rested and cleaned them both of leeches before, in a daze and with red lances of exhaustion shooting through his head, he blundered out on to the sand of the little cove, lowered the nun and dropped beside her.

"Low tide," he muttered. He heard the clicking of crabs and the sea tang was strong in his nostrils. It refreshed him after the foetid darkness of the jungle. He beat off his tiredness and forced himself to think, for he knew about the crabs at low tide.

He scooped a shallow hole in the sand and rolled the nun into it, shovelling sand over her with his hands until only her face was uncovered. He scooped another hole

beside her, got into it and scraped sand over himself. He put himself on the seaward side of her so that he would feel the water first if the tide returned. He was still feebly scraping when he fell asleep.

All through the night the voracious little crabs attacked them. Their avid nippers at his hands and face would wake Allison and he'd start and strike at them and curse, whereas they would vanish, clicking, into the darkness, and he would sleep again, one hand over the nun's face to protect her. When movement ceased the crabs crept in again, with little sidelong runs, advancing and retreating, drawing ever closer, till their nippers awakened him again and he would lash out and throw handfuls of sand and croak at them.

Thus, sleeping and waking, with the nun in a stupor in her living grave beside him, Private Hank Allison stood to his duty until the dawn lit that alien shore.

Allison opened his eyes and looked lazily about him. The noise of the sea on the beach caused realisation to rush upon him. He struggled from the sand, chilled with the damp and coldness of it, his limbs stiff from the exertions of the night and from the grip of the sand. It was painful to get arms and legs working. When he did he swept the sand away from the nun, watching her anxiously, darting alert glances at the jungle and along the beach. The battalions of little crabs ran away from either side of him, but he wasn't interested in them any more.

He shook the nun until her eyes opened.

"Come," he said. "We can't stay here. Somebody come into the bay over there last night, a ship. They shot up the house. We gotta go hide."

She looked past him with a peculiarly shallow, bird-like look, her head slanted to one side. She pulled herself strongly from the sand and stood up. The mud still stuck to hands and face and ankles. It was caked in her hair. Her robe was smeared with mud and hung damply on her. There were rents in it here and there.

"Come," he said again, and put out a hand to help her.

Still looking beyond him she moved away from the hand. She staggered, regained her balance, appeared to ponder, a finger to one cheek. She emitted a little cackle of senseless laughter and ran staggeringly towards the jungle.

Helplessly, he watched her. His mind was temporarily paralysed. A deadly lethargy hung on his limbs and he felt a sweat of weakness and impotence start all over his body. He awoke slightly, but his mind began to recover and he desperately forced himself to remain erect, watching Sister Angela. She ran among the trees and fell down. She struggled up, moved a step or two, and fell again. At this some strength returned to Allison and he walked slowly up the beach to her. She was crouched in a tangle of vines, muttering to herself, idly plucking leaves and rolling them between her fingers.

Allison looked at her. There was nothing he could do with her. There was nobody on whom to call for help, nowhere to take her. He crinkled up his face and spat sideways. It was then that a new and startling thought occurred to him. Until this moment he had been convinced that the searchlight and the guns that had driven them forth last night were Japanese. He hadn't waited to make sure of it. Now it struck him that it might easily have been his own people, or English or Dutch.

He frowned over the problem. The more he thought of it the more likely it seemed that the ship over there was not Japanese. Japanese had occupied the island and they had believed themselves to be safe from attack. Why then should they return in the night after so brief an absence and shoot the place up? They had left it unoccupied, they

would maintain a reconnaissance of land and sea, they had no reason to shoot up the bungalow on their return.

He felt a mounting excitement at the idea possessed him that friends were probably on the other side of the island. He looked down at the crazy woman. He could risk leaving her here in the early morning while he hurried over the island and identified the newcomers. He drew away quietly until out of her sight, then made his way through the jungle.

He watched them for a half-hour or so, hope gone and his heart set within him. Three destroyers were anchored to seaward, four merchantmen closer in. From them Japanese were coming and coming in lighters and landing craft that dumped men and supplies on the beach. Tents had sprung up in ranks along the shore above the ruined wharf, men were busy everywhere.

"That's the finish," he thought. The island would be patrolled now, there would be outposts around its shores, strongposts back in the hills. There was nothing lacking in the bearing of this force. He knew that it had no women with it.

He withdrew and went back to the nun, whom he found wandering aimlessly on the beach. Without a word he took her by a hand and led her into the jungle and towards their old foxhole. He hoped some sort of shelter had survived the rains, sufficient to keep them while he thought the thing out. All the time utter despair kept battering at the walls of his self-control. Sister Angela followed him meekly. He tried to make her understand the danger, but she was in a world beyond his mental reach.

What had been Sister Angela's foxhole was a tangled ruin of sunken earth, iron, and vines. His own had some semblance of a hole about it. With his hands he scooped out the specky silt and threw it outside, unthinking of the evidence it would offer to searching eyes. He built up here and pulled down there, plugged cracks with mud, used brush to pack the broken roof, and so made a rough retreat. Presently he pushed the nun into it and made her sit on a heap of fronds.

**C**OAXINGLY he said: "You sit here while Daddy goes for ice-cream," cozening her in obedience with this childish order because he couldn't think of anything else. She was like a child. She sat down willingly, idly playing with her fingers.

He noticed that her rotary, fouled with mud, was still about her neck. Moved by some indefinable impulse he bent and gently removed it. He plucked a handful of leaves and rubbed the beads through them until most of the mud was cleaned away. He held the rosary bunched in his left hand and looked at it curiously. The crucifix hung across the base of his palm and it drew Allison's gaze and held it. He became aware of a silence all about him and a strange, slow thrill ran through him. Involuntarily his hand brought the little ebony figure on the cross closer to his eyes.

A faint stirring began deep down inside him and arose to his throat as a strong, wrenching sigh. With the sigh the tenseness ran out of him and thought returned. He put the rosary into Sister Angela's hands, taking care that she should not drop it. She grasped the beads and passed them through her fingers like a blind person trying to identify something, then slowly she began to tell them in a light, hesitant whisper. Allison saw her face relax suddenly and lose something of its vacuity. He bit his lip and stepped quietly away. He looked at her again. She was absorbed, her head bowed over the beads. The hair on the nape of her neck was curling in wisps, like that of a boy who needs a barber. Satisfied that she would remain there,



Allison scrambled out of the hole. He had two things to do: Find out what the enemy was doing, and find something to eat.

As he made his way towards the landing-place he was aware of a clamor of birds, but did not appreciate its meaning until a flight of brilliant green parrots went shrieking over his head. He stopped, all eyes and ears, then moved swiftly into the undergrowth and hid himself, listening and watching. Across a small open space little more than sixty yards above him on the rise of the hill, six Japanese soldiers passed. Their uniforms were green, each of them carried a sub-machine gun. They moved silently and purposefully in the manner of men performing a duty under command. Allison saw that though short in build they were sturdy; a better type than the former party.

He lay hidden until they had passed from view, waited long enough to be sure, by the noise of the alarmed birds, that they were bearing away from the foxholes on a line that would take them down into the valley of the little river, then he hurried back to the nun, keeping to cover and pausing frequently to examine the ground ahead. He felt that patrols were now exploring the whole island. "This is curtains," his mind said, and he went on, impelled by a desire to be with Sister Angela when the inevitable enemy eye discovered them.

She was asleep, huddled among the debris in a corner of the foxhole. The sleep was restless; her hands twitched and she made little whimpering sounds, something like a dog when it dreams. He sat down wearily, exhausted with effort and anxiety, and fell into an uneasy doze.

Towards night the rain began again. It was steady and strong and brought with it a suffocating humidity. Allison lay against the silvery wall of the foxhole and listened to it, breathing heavily in the weighted atmosphere, with a slackness on his limbs and a weariness of mind and spirit. He could not see the nun. She gabbled inanely now and then. By the tone of the voice he guessed she was hungry and the desire for food troubled him greatly.

He became aware that he was lying in water. He moved, feeling about him in the gloom. Water was seeping down the wall in little streams; forming a pool on the foxhole floor. He considered this gravely, then relaxed. There was nothing to be done about it, and outside was the deluge. He called to Sister Angela once, and when she did not answer he arose and felt for her in the blackness. When his hands touched her he had a momentary illusion that she floated in the air, but it faded when she squirmed under his touch. Satisfied that she was still alive, he drew away and lay down in the slush. He slept fitfully, partly in a coma and with quick, frightening dreams troubling him. Outside were the lark darkness, and the steady, muted roar of the rain. And the leeches took their fill.

Allison awoke to a grey light to find himself partly submerged in mud and water. He got up and looked for Sister Angela. She lay with her head thrown back and her mud-caked face ghastly in the dawn, her mouth open. Believing her dead he squatted for some moments looking at her, sickened by a wave of poignant loneliness. Then he saw that she breathed.

He arose and looked out upon the day and saw only the curtain of rain. He squelched through the watery mush of the foxhole floor and bent over her, slipping his hand under her shoulders to raise her. She came up unresistingly in his grasp and her robe, rotted at last by the everlasting damp, came away in his hands in shreds. She awoke and looked up at him blankly, unaware of her situation or of her bare shoulders and arms. She was like a little child.

Allison scratched an itchy place

on his left side and automatically plucked the leeches from Sister Angela's hands. He contemplated her torn robe for a moment, then he bent and swiftly tore it away, leaving her in her white linen undergarments. He went to the far end of the foxhole, swiftly removed his pants and shirt—the cloth of which had so far resisted the Philippines fighting, the sea, and this wet jungle—and as swiftly fashioned himself a loin-cloth from the remnants of the black robe. Then, handling her as ruthlessly and efficiently as though she were a baby, he pulled the shirt over her head, forced her arms through the sleeves, and buttoned it. He forced her into his pants, shoving the undergarments down as best he could.

She made no attempt to resist. When it was done she sat in the slush and muttered to herself. Allison looked at her with satisfaction—if the Japanese came at least she would be respectable. He had been worried with the prospect of them seeing her in her rotten robe.

"Daddy go for ice-cream," he said.

HE pushed his way out of the foxhole into the rain. He stretched himself, naked except for the loin-cloth and his boots, and he felt the rain beating on his body. Much of his strength had returned and he was very hungry.

"Maybe the rain will keep them under cover," he muttered, but he was tensely alert as he struck off down the streaming hillside towards the little river, intending to go to the place where the yams grew.

He rounded a thicket of shrub and liana, and promptly dove into it, heedless of pricks and scratches. He had almost walked into a Japanese soldier. The man, wearing a rubber poncho from which the rain rebounded in tiny showers, was standing with his back to Allison, peering through the rain along an opening in the brush. In the instant before diving for cover Allison saw two more Japanese moving at the far end of the opening.

He lay in the thicket, his head turned sideways, listening for shout or shot, his body nerving itself against the expected shock of a bullet. All he heard was the rain on the leaves. As nothing happened his heart steadied and his nerves stopped leaping.

Presently he lifted his head slowly and looked about him. His vision on either side was cut off by the brush. The rain ran down his face and he shook it off. Chills moved along his body. He lifted himself and, darting glances on all sides, slowly turned himself about and crawled inch by inch to the edge of the thicket. The Japanese hadn't stirred. He was standing there, the rain cascading from his poncho, his back to Allison.

Allison looked beyond him, craning his neck to see down the open space. Nothing moved save the water running down the slope. Allison drew his head back and lay there, his eyes on the solitary Japanese. He was puzzled.

What was the Jap watching? Where were his comrades? What was he waiting for? Allison frowned and slowly pushed his head forward again. He was caught. He doesn't attempt to get away. He must lie there and wait till the Japanese moved off. But the Japanese didn't move. This couldn't go on; desperation mounted in Allison as it occurred to him that the man might have been posted there—might stand in that spot for hours.

A wild reckless impulse shook Allison. The Jap was no more than fifteen feet away. If he could get to his feet and start his rush before he was discovered he could—

He drew back and got hold of himself, his thoughts racing. One part of him wanted to stay hidden as long as possible, till the Jap went away or till night came. The other part urged him to close with the enemy. What had he to lose? Naked,

starving, a crazed woman back there in the foxholes who wouldn't live long, anyhow, the rain streaming down. No food, no hope of rescue, little hope of survival. The Japanese had arms, he probably had food, he was sure to have cigarettes, he had a poncho to keep the rain off. One quick rush and a blow in the right place might win them all. If it failed—

"What the hell!" his mind said. His lips drew back and he served himself.

The Japanese turned rather slowly as he heard the rush of Allison's boots. There was no thought in his mind of danger. Even so, though this slowness and his astonishment on beholding a naked man leaping on him out of the rain struck him dumb, he instinctively swung aside. Allison's driving right fist missed his jaw and struck him on the cheek. The blow staggered him and Allison flung an arm around his throat and threw him sideways. They went down into the drenched brush in a struggling heap.

The Japanese was wiry, strong, and slippery, but his poncho, uniform, and equipment hampered him, whereas Allison was practically naked and had the strength of desperation; he was half as heavy again as his opponent and he had entire freedom of movement. The Japanese forced a grunt past the choking arm around his throat and tried to force Allison off with one hand, the other searching for a weapon. He kicked and squirmed and bucked. Allison used feet, knees, and hands. He kicked and kneed wherever he could, used his weight to keep the other down, pushed the grimacing face into the mud.

The Japanese got a kick home in Allison's stomach which made him grunt; he punched savagely at the Jap's ribs with his free hand and bared his teeth at the answering gasp. Then his knee went in and the Japanese forced a choking cry from his clamped throat, heaved in an excess of agony, and collapsed.

Allison kneed him again, struck him with his free hand, shook him, but he remained limp, making queer little wheezing sounds. Allison's free hand searched frantically and found the scabbarded bayonet. He tore it free and jabbed it madly into the limp body. The Japanese heaved again, shuddered violently down his whole length, almost threw Allison off with a mighty bend of his body, then collapsed and was still.

STILL holding the bayonet, Allison slowly relaxed his other arm from around the throat and slowly raised himself, watching his enemy closely, ready to stab again at the hint of movement. There was none.

Allison stood erect and glared about him. Then he picked up the body and stumbled into the brush with it. He dropped it and went back, keeping in cover, the bayonet ready in his hand. He waited awhile. Nothing happened. He saw that the rain was already washing out the marks of struggle in the mud and he pulled the broken brush into some semblance of order. Again he rested, watching all the openings in the jungle, listening for searching shouts. Nothing disturbed the evening drumming of the rain. He went back to the dead man, put the bayonet in its scabbard, lifted the body and carried it to the foxhole, pausing frequently to rest and to look all around him and listen.

In the dim, wet hole the nun crouched as he had left her, fingers playing idly with the rosary beads, her head nodding silently, her eyes looking blankly before her. Allison carried the dead soldier to the rear of the foxhole and laid him in the mud. He stood up and frowned, wondering why he had handled the enemy body so gently. After a moment or so of resting on his feet, he bent and removed the sub-machine gun from under the poncho. He looked at it closely, trying to understand how it worked, for it was of a pattern strange to him.

He took it nearer to the entrance in order to have more light and then he understood it. He worked the safety catch, slipped the magazine out, and examined the bullets. They were small; he guessed them to be of .25 calibre. He replaced the clip, checked the safety catch, and put the gun carefully against the wall so that its working parts and barrel were clear of the mud.

He looked at the dead soldier. He ought to search him now, but his mind had a strange reluctance to set about the task. His imagination went out of the foxholes and down to the Japanese camp. They would surely have missed the man by this time; most likely they were out in the rain searching for him. They'd come back to the spot where they'd last seen him. Probably they were calling to him, out there in the jungle and the rain.

Allison stepped to the entrance and bent an ear, listening. He heard no more than the rain's mutter and a soft sighing, as though a wind blew. Perhaps they had called and he hadn't heard them, what with his hurry and the pounding of his blood and his boots squelching in the mud—squelching—

ALLISON leapt to the gun, slipped the safety catch and sped to the entrance, the nose of the gun up, his eyes glaring out at the rain-swept scene. If they had eyes they'd see the tracks of his boots in the mud and follow them. They'd be out there now, tracing the tracks to that tangle of brush, knowing the owner of the boots was in there. They'd be eyeing the hole, warily keeping to one side or the other, debating whether to toss in a grenade before rushing in.

Allison crouched, still as death, his nerves taut, his throat dry, waiting for them. Suddenly the waiting was too much. He raised the gun, finger on the trigger, and shouted, "Come on, I'm here! Here I am!"

Nothing happened. The grey curtain of the rain hung there impassively. There was no sound save that of falling water, no movement other than that of water. At first he couldn't believe it, then he knew it was true and, though there were no witnesses, he experienced the embarrassment of a man who has made a fool of himself.

"Heck," he grunted, disgustedly. He relaxed, but maintained his vigil. The time passed. Perhaps they hadn't yet missed their comrade. Allison crinkled up his bearded face and spat sideways.

"So what?" he said, aloud, as men will who have been too long alone. "So they get back to camp. Their buddy don't show. There's questions. This one asks that one. Nobody's seen him. Presently they got it clear that nobody's seen him. They get to worrying. He'll be in Dutch if he goes A.W.O.L. So some of them start right back to find him. A sergeant gets to hear of it. He waits a little, then he sends out maybe four or ten more. Pretty soon there's a whole company beating through the brush. Right about now I guess they're hunting all round."

So he remained crouched by the entrance, his gun ready, waiting, feeling cold along his bare body in spite of the sultriness. He took the poncho and put it over his bare shoulders. It was too small for him, but it kept the moisture that dripped from the roof off his shoulders. And then they came.

They were ponchoed and hooded against the rain and they came shouting to one another and to the missing one in high-pitched voices. Ten of them, deployed in a close line as though skirmishing. They went past the foxhole entrance, the nearest of them within thirty feet of Allison, walking past death and not knowing it. They didn't look at the ground, except now and then to watch their steps; their eyes searched the jungle at head level. They shouted, and called to one another between the shouts.

There were other shouts, beyond them and off to the right, and there was a strong voice calling somewhere in the rain on the hill behind the foxhole. They hadn't seen any tracks; the rain had filled and blurred them. They didn't suppose their comrade to be anything more than strayed somewhere. They had no suspicion of an enemy on the island. Thought that their comrade had been killed by human or animal hadn't occurred to them.

All day they shouted about the island; two or three times Allison heard shots. Four different parties walked by the foxhole and one man almost blundered into it. Allison saw the gattered legs and the shoes stamp by almost within arm's reach. He had the gun trained on the man and somehow he kept his finger from squeezing the trigger. It was minutes before his heart slowed down. He was mildly astonished when the day reached its end and the searchers gave it up. He knew they would be out again in the morning, more anxious than ever, irritated or alarmed by the mystery, suspicious, and searching more closely and carefully.

When darkness came Allison collapsed. He slid down against the sludgy foxhole wall in a stupor of exhaustion and crying nerves. All day he had scarcely glanced at the dead soldier or the crazy nun. Now he lay slumped in the darkness, the machine-gun across his legs, his mouth slack, his breathing gradually becoming deep and regular.

When he awoke he was immediately conscious of hunger. It was like a pain. He got up and felt his way to the dead man. His hand had reached the stiff form when Sister Angela said, in a small, steady voice, "Is that you, Mr. Allison? I can't see you? Is it you?"

Allison paused, scarcely able to believe his ears. Her voice was quiet, without a hint of hysteria or craziness. Her words were sensible.

"Yes," he said, slowly turning his head towards her in the darkness. "Yes, it's me, I guess. You all right, Sister?"

"I—I think so. I feel very tired. The house seems to be very wet."

"We ain't in the house. We're in the foxhole. The rain's coming in. It's been raining for days. Didn't you see the rain?"

There was a short silence. She said, "What happened to the house?"

"The Japs came back. We had to scam out o' there, but fast. You was—you was—you've had fever."

"Oh," it was an exclamation of astonishment. She was silent then, and he resumed his search of the dead. In a pouch he found what seemed like small scones. He nibbled one. Rice cakes. There were biscuits, too. He pulled the pouch away and moved to the nun.

"Hold out your hand," he said, and thrust a handful of rice cakes and biscuits towards her. Their hands met. Her fingers felt for the food and took hold of it.

"Thank you," she said. Allison ate the rest of the food, savoring it. There wasn't much of it, but it did him immense good.

He was feeling through the dead man's pockets again when she said, "Is there someone else? I had the strangest impression. I thought you came in with a child in your arms." She gave a small, deprecatory laugh.

Allison found a pencil, a pack of cigarettes, a clasp-knife. He ignored the pencil, opened the knife and stuck it in the wall, and held the cigarettes in one hand, having no place to put them at the moment and being anxious to keep them dry.

"We're in a jam," he said. "It's a dead Jap soldier. I—well, I had to bring him here. The others was looking for him. All day they been looking. I got his gun. We got to get rid of him. They'll be looking again, come morning. We can't keep him here—the smell and all that."

He found a petrol lighter and felt an uplift of the spirit because of



it. He snapped the small flame on, lit a cigarette and doused the lighter. The smoke was harsh to his palate, but he drew it in with delight.

"Ah," he grunted.  
"Mr. Allison," her voice was low and there was little strength in it. "are we badly off? Is there danger? You must tell me."

"I couldn't be no worse." He drew slowly at the harsh cigarette, enjoying it.

"Don't you recall nothing?" he asked.

"I—I—there seemed to be fire—" she paused. "That's all," she added faintly.

"You had fever," he said. "You went out of your mind. A week or so you been out of your mind. You got cured of the fever, but you was still out of your mind. Strain, I guess. Anybody's likely to do it. You didn't know about the Japs coming back. I dragged—well, I got you up here. There's only one good foxhole, the other was washed out. It was two days—no, two nights ago—we come up here. It rained all the time. It never stopped, the rain. There was this Jap. I was out—well, he got killed."

He was talking carefully, avoiding unnecessary details, not wishing to say anything that might start her craziness again. One part of his mind talked to her, the other part was planning what to do with the dead soldier.

"What is this around me?"

He pursed his lips in the darkness, wondering what she would think of his appearance when she saw him. He forced a laugh, partly from embarrassment, partly to put her at ease.

"You—your dress? I guess it just plumed rotted off you. It's this blamed wet. You're wearing the shirt and pants of a U.S. Marine. It's all there was, I guess."

She made a little sound of which he could make nothing. Then she said, "I feel so tired."

"There's been no food," he said. "Not till to-night. And that's all he had. I got his gun and ammo. Maybe I'll get a shot at something. Only we got to be careful. They'll be all over the place come morning."

**S**HE made no reply. He relieved the dead of a pack containing clips of ammunition for the gun, and of belt and bayonet. He stripped away the uniform and rolled it tightly, thinking it might be useful. He shoved it into a niche high in a corner of the foxhole. Then he picked up the body. He pushed it through the foxhole entrance, got through himself, picked up the body and went away to the west beach. He had intended to bury it deeply in the sand there, but he recalled the myriads of voracious crabs, and there was presented to him a grisly way of hiding the body. His mind shrank from it only momentarily, for it was conditioned now to both the savagery of war and of this desperate existence—he was leading.

He debated with himself whether or not to bury it. Then, like a flash, he thought of the mangroves on the southern shore.

When he was inside the foxhole again Sister Angela asked for a drink.

"There ain't anything," he said, astonished to find that he had trouble with his voice—it wanted to run away from him and rise in a shriek. "Nothing to hold it. The bowls was left in the house when we come back here that night. There's water on the floor—on the floor."

Weakness flowed over him like a wave. The day-long vigil and this final task with the dead Japanese had brought him to the end of his strength. He put out his hands and touched the oozy wall, resting on them. Then he began to slip down the wall. He tried to cling to it with his fingers, his long nails digging into the soft earth, but it was no good. He felt his legs going from

under him and he sighed suddenly and let go.

He found himself walking along a narrow bank of sand, with clear water on either side, and he looked about him in an effort to identify the scene, but it was all strange to him. Under the water he could see the funny little sea-dogs, with their hairless yellow bodies and their pricked ears, searching along the sand.

They were no bigger than rats, and he wondered how they could live under the water. He stopped to watch one of them. It was trying to tear open a clam. Allison could see the clam resisting with all its might, but the little dog was stronger and the shell opened and a mass of pink and yellow stuff oozed out.

"That's what makes them yellow, eating that stuff," he said to somebody, but there was nobody there.

The little, hairless, watery-eyed dog began to eat, champing its little jaws and tearing at the clam flesh, its stumpy tail wagging. Allison called to it, but it ignored him, and he realised it couldn't hear him under the water. He bent and pushed the water apart with his hands, but the dog leapt back and snarled and began to swell and it had the face of a Japanese.

He arose and rushed along the sand, seeing Sister Angela running before him. Her draperies flew about her like clouds. As he ran, the clouds became longer and longer and seemed to be reaching for him and trying to save him from whatever pursued him. He ran faster, striving frantically to reach them, but they swept upward out of his reach and he fell into a warm darkness that was soft like cushions as he sank among them. There was peace then and no more running, only the slow, warm sinking and the rich smell of soup.

"Soup!" he thought in wonder and gave himself to the darkness.

He awoke to find Sister Angela shaking him. There was a dim, grey light in the foxhole. He sat up and glared around, confused between the memories of his dream and the reality of the morning. When his mind cleared he arose from the muck of the floor. The nun moved back and stood against the wall. She seemed monstrous and unreal in the unearthly dawn light.

"They are coming," she said.

He reached for the gun and leapt to the entrance. He heard their voices before he saw the two Japanese soldiers. The rain had ceased and the air was clear above the low fog that hung close to the ground and wreathed about the bushes. He could hear parrots. The Japanese passed on and disappeared. He sighed and turned to Sister Angela.

"We're through," he said. "No food. Only the gun." He held it up for her to see. "We can sit down here and die or we can get out and go surrender to them."

He was silent, his head sunk in the apathy of defeat. He was beyond caring what their fate was to be.

"Last night," she said, and there was a strange, impersonal note in her voice, as though she were reciting something that had no application to either of them, "last night you said that I'd had fever?"

He raised his head. The question penetrated his apathy. It stirred his dulled mind to curiosity. He looked and saw her half-reclining against the muddy wall, her head turned away from him. He could make nothing of her expression.

"That's right," he answered.

"You said that I was out of my mind?"

"Sure."

"You asked if I recalled anything?"

"Right again."

There was a brief silence.

"I want you to know," she said, and now her tone had changed. It seemed she found speaking rather painful. She hesitated, then went on, "I want you to know that—that

I remember what—what happened when—when, that is, before I got the fever. I want you to know that."

So that was it. She wanted to harp on that old thing that was now so far away, weeks old. He felt resentment rising in him. That was all done. It was part of another life. There was no good in bringing it up now. What they had to do now was decide whether to die of hunger or give themselves up to the enemy. Women were queer, all right, and these nun women were the queerest of the lot. To bring it up now, when it didn't matter any more.

Allison peered at her, striving for some guide to her thoughts, trying to anticipate them. Suddenly his resentment vanished. That didn't matter, either. There was no more feeling resentful or angry with her. The time for all this was past, like his desire. He had almost forgotten his desire and his pursuit of her. There was no room in him for desire.

**I**T was all gone and done with, because she belonged to him in another way. She belonged to him because he had nursed her through the fever and the craziness, and because, up to now, he had managed to keep her from capture and keep her alive. He meant to keep her alive if he could, but to do that he would have to lose her to the Japanese. He had no more food and the patrolling Japanese made the getting of food almost impossible. Their isolation and their freedom couldn't last much longer. There was no more safety unless they stayed in the foxhole and that meant slow death. He meant to save her life and her only chance lay with the Japanese. She must go to them and hope to survive as their prisoner.

He had no plans for himself; he didn't think of himself just now. That didn't matter until he had provided for her. She was like a child in many things—like his own child, because he had saved her and was thinking for her—and if she wanted to talk about that old thing it didn't matter. He didn't mind humoring her.

"All right," he said. "Now I know it."

"I want you to know it because if—if there was to be anything more like—like that—I'd go to the Japanese. You see, I've been awake all night, thinking. Remembering and thinking. It was a—"

"Silly, thinking like that," he interrupted. "It doesn't do good. It's all past. It's done. It doesn't need thinking about no more. Silly to think about it." Though unaware of it he was speaking like an elder comforting a fretful child.

She didn't reply at once and he was glad, assuming that she had accepted his advice. She quickly corrected his mistake.

"I do not want to think about it," she said coldly. "But there are many things I must know. That is why I must talk to you before—well, before we decide whether to stay here or go to the Japanese. It's because I had the fever."

"Because you had the fever?"

"Yes. You see, I do not know what happened while I had the fever, or afterwards, when I was out of my mind. I—"

He turned swiftly upon her at that, his eyes blazing, his voice harshly indignant.

"If you think I'd—if you think I'm that kind—why, you—you—" He was speechless for the moment, and then, as quickly as before, his anger died. He growled, "What the heck! I guess it don't matter what you think now."

She was plainly amazed by his outburst. "I wish I could understand you," she complained. "You mustn't be so impatient. You see, I—I—we've been through so much. Maybe I'm not myself; maybe I don't make myself clear."

He sensed rather than saw that she was weeping to herself and he realised that she was tired and weak from hunger, and confused. He tried

to puzzle her words out and presently he concluded he had put a wrong construction on what she had said about the fever and the time after the fever. With some relief he said, "Well, talk. I'll not be hasty with you. You've had a bad time. I guess."

"You see," she said eagerly, "there are two things of different kinds. The first is that—that thing—that which happened before the fever; the second that which happened during the fever and when I was delirious. Please bear with me, Mr. Allison. I'm a rather simple person and I have to reconcile the two of them. I—well, I'm not a woman of the world. I have been a nun these ten years, since I was a young girl. There are many things we nuns know nothing about—many things we don't think about. I'm trying to understand—indeed, I hope I am beginning to understand—what was behind that—that change in you."

She was talking earnestly, anxious to have him share her reasoning. "I mean the change that made me run away from you. I want you to understand it because I'm sure that if I can understand it I may be a more tolerant woman and a better nun. More tolerant of the world, I mean, and a better nun because of it. It has puzzled and frightened me, sometimes, to see something of what goes on in the world. It could be—it could be we are too ignorant of worldly things. I don't know. I have to try to understand. So, you see, I've been thinking."

"Yes," he said, knowing he was called upon to speak but not knowing what to say because he wasn't clear as to what it all meant. "Yes, you've sure been thinking."

"Yes," she said, and there was a more vital quality in her voice. "You see, there was the fever and me being out of my mind."

"So you got to thinking about the fever?"

"You nursed me? Did things for me?"

"That's right."

"You had to keep me clean and—dry—and give me food and drink and—do things for me?"

"Uh-huh."

She was silent for so long a time that he thought she had finished.

"Are you very hungry, Sister?" he asked, lamely seeking to help her.

"Oh? Oh no. Not more than usually. Never mind that. You had to care for me—nurse me—all through the fever and the crazy time?"

"Like I told you."

"And you gave me your—your clothes?"

"There wasn't no others."

"I don't suppose it's been very amusing for you, Mr. Allison, or very pleasant. I don't suppose you saw anything to laugh about?"

"What the heck would there be to laugh about?" he demanded in sheer astonishment.

"No," she said. "Nothing to laugh about. A raving nun and a half-starved soldier to care for her. No, there hasn't been much to laugh about, or much to sing about, since we met, has there? Do you mind if I sing a little now, Mr. Allison?"

"Say," he asked anxiously, "are you all right? Do you think you ought to get a little sleep?"

"Oh, I am not going out of my mind again, never fear. I really want to sing. I really do, thanks to the Blessed Virgin who has protected me and made me a better nun through you."

"Through me!"

She ignored his exclamation and his astonishment and she began to sing. Her voice was low and he couldn't distinguish the words of her little hymn of praise and thanksgiving. He sat there and listened, frowning, afraid, despite her assurance, that she was going to be crazy again.

The hymn merged into a prayer and he listened, charmed by a strange sense of peace. It was as though all the hardship and peril of the past days had passed away, as though hunger and the imminent danger of death or capture faded away and were not; or didn't matter any more. Then her prayer

ceased and in the silence the peace went away from his mind and the trouble came back again. Outside he could hear the chatter of birds, but there was no sound of rain. He turned and looked through the entrance and saw sunlight and blue sky. He knew the Japanese would be walking about in the jungle nevertheless the blue sky cheered him a little.

Sister Angela moved and he looked at her. She had left the wall and was coming to him. She bent to where he squatted and put her hands lightly on his head and said, her voice soft and sweet, while her grey eyes held his by the deep light in them. "Bless you and bless you, my dear companion. I have no fear of you now. Only trust and love."

Had Allison been in his normal condition of physical and mental health, the effect of this demonstration upon him would have been most difficult to describe. It would most certainly have embarrassed and alarmed him, and it would have aroused other emotions. But worn with fatigue and worry, with fear in his heart and great hunger in his stomach, dirty, unkempt, so reduced by the privations and exertions of the past few days as to be on the point of collapse, sustained only by his will and that mysterious inner core of strength which keeps him of his type on their feet to the last, it did little more than arouse a passing wonder.

This woman had always been incomprehensible to him, she was more so now, for he had ceased to ponder over her personality or to attempt to discover her character. To him she was no more than another, and weaker, human being over whom he had to watch and who was an inescapable part of his present life.

**H**ER words and gestures had, it is true, stirred his heart. He knew pleasure at her praising him and very likely he gained strength from her demonstrated trust in him. But of these impressions he was hardly aware; they insinuated themselves through the layers of mud and worry and weariness that lay on his spirit, without sensation. It was not until afterwards that they discovered themselves and he brought them out into the light and polished them and saw that the words she had spoken were something to cherish to the end of his days.

At the moment his mind had room only for questions: Ought they to go and surrender themselves before they starved to death or were discovered? Ought he to send the nun to surrender herself alone and take his chance alone in the island jungle, with the captured sub-machine gun for his weapon?

He wiped a hand across his eyes and turned uneasily, feeling the caked mud on his naked body slip as the sweat oozed under it. He crinkled up his face and was about to spit, but restrained himself and said, slowly: "Sister, that was mighty fine, I guess. I sure appreciate it. But it don't get us nowhere. We got to face it. We're all out of food and with them Japs chasing about there ain't but a small chance of getting any food. Do we starve it out here or do I take you down there and let the Japs find you? They'd send you somewhere and feed you, I guess. That's how she lies and it's for you to have your say."

"Has it come to that?"

"Guess so. Guess I—I—well, I guess it had to come."

"Couldn't we—couldn't you—there is the gun—you could shoot a bird—or—"

"The first shot would bring them Japs on the run. Should they come on us and me with a gun—"

He left the rest to her imagination.

"No," she declared, with a frantic note in her voice. "Surely God won't desert us now. Not after all this time? Surely—"

"If God was interested in us," Allison said calmly and without emotion. "He'd have got us out before this. Don't keep harping on that. It don't do no good. I guess God's got other things to do."



"Oh, Mr. Allison, if only I could make you believe. God has some purpose with us. I know it. We are not deserted! All that—that time before the fever, and the fever, and afterwards, means something. You've got to believe—"

He lost patience with her.

"All right," he said. "Let's believe. Let's believe and get out of this hole and go give up to the Japs now. If what you say is true, nothing can happen. Or can it?"

She wrung her hands.

"But I don't want to go. Don't you see? I'm so sure we shouldn't go. Why do I feel like that if I'm not being guided? Why—"

He got up and put the gun in the back of the foxhole.

"Please yourself," he grunted. He was almost at the end of talk. "Guess we can wait another day, maybe, if it comes to that. I'll go see what I can find. You stay put, Sister, till I get back."

She didn't want to be left. She was scared by his calmness, rightly sensing that it presaged the apathy of despair. She called to him in frantic anxiety, but he ignored her and scrambled from the foxhole. He began to walk away, but halted abruptly as a warship's alarm siren shrieked up from the bay, and was followed almost at once by a rapid shudding of guns.

As Allison paused in astonishment, a twin-engined plane roared low over his head in a swooping dive. He had time to see the white stars on its wings before it vanished over the tree-tops. He stood with mouth agape, hearing shrapnel patter down on the jungle near him. Then hope and excitement came leaping to life in him and took his breath away. Down in the bay the guns thudded on, multiple quick-firers and the heavier detachments of high-angle four and six-inchers. He listened for plane engines, straining to hear them. The guns ceased and the silence was unbelievable. Still he listened for plane engines. There were none. With new strength flowing through him, he rushed back to the foxhole, crying, "Sister! Sister! They're here. The Air Force. They're here. Flew right over me. Right over my head."

The nun's face looked out at him from the foxhole.

"It's true," he raved. "Flew right over me. They were shooting at him."

He pushed into the foxhole, seized the sub-machine gun, and turned about.

"Gotta be in it," he mumbled. She barred his way.

"No!" she cried. "No! You must wait. The guns have stopped. You must wait!"

"Wait!" he yelled, glaring wildly. "Wait! Not me. I'm through with waiting. Lemme out o' here!"

"No!" she cried again.

He stepped forward. Her face seemed to leave her body and rise before him. Darkness flowed round him and he tried to push it aside. Sister Angela broke his fall as best she could, and when he was on the floor she pulled him round so that his head lay in her lap. She wiped the sweat from his bearded face and sat there, supporting his head. There was nothing else she could do except pray.

The young, bearded, tired face stirred her strangely. She put a hand to her cheek and stroked it thoughtfully, frowning at the unconscious face. In the light from the foxhole entrance she could see tiny blue veins in the eyelids and the deep hollows between his eyes and the bridge of his nose. The mouth was drawn slightly back from the teeth in an expression of pathetic suffering. With the beard and the dark hollows and the mouth there was composed a memory that struck through her. She looked fixedly at the face and suddenly it came to her. She had seen that face before, or one very like it, in the pictured face of Jesus as His head hung sideways on the Cross.

"Ave Maria," she murmured. "In all Thy sons, dear God, is the stamp of Thy image." She moved her hand to wipe the sweat from Allison's forehead and saw her arm in the worn khaki of the Marine's shirt. Her lips twisted a little, for she believed she was looking at a symbol and a sacrifice.

The shirt and trousers she wore were the symbol of the changed Allison, of the man who had nursed her through fever and craziness, who had saved her for what new purpose she was destined—the symbol of the earthly agent of the Virgin. And the sacrifice was in Allison's naked body—bared to the ravages of sun and rain, of jungle thorns and poisonous insect and disease—so that she might be protected against these things.

LATER she became cramped and had to relieve herself with movement. She felt Allison's face and hands for signs of the fever she feared, but there were none. He was in a deep coma of utter physical exhaustion; the little starts he gave, the incomprehensible words and whimpers he emitted from time to time showed that his mind was away on strange paths. Sister Angela gently got herself from under his head and laid that head gently on the damp earth. She was uncomfortable and prickly from the heat. She stood up and eased her cramped limbs. Her eye fell upon the dead soldier's uniform, rolled into a bundle against the far wall of the foxhole. She turned away from it with a little shudder and went and stood by the entrance.

From time to time she looked again at the uniform, and then out at the day and the patch of jungle within her vision. She was trying to make herself accept the practical, though horrid, idea that the Japanese uniform would fit her, though obviously too small for Allison, and that Allison could recline himself in his own gear. She glanced at the sleeping man, and from him to the bundle and away again. "If one could wash it," she thought. "Wash the blood out of it."

She turned away again and her mind wandered a little. She caught herself up and tried to think in an orderly way of her immediate future, but her thoughts wandered erratically from one thing to another. The heat, the caked mud in her hair and on her face and hands, the bite of hunger, made her restless. She began to chew at the fingernails of her right hand, but caught herself at it and thrust the hand behind her. Memory flashed pictures at her—her sister nuns going about their duties in the Canadian convent and wondering about her (such is human vanity), a man swimming away from a crowded boat into the vast sea, fragments of prayer, odd flashes from the past week on this island, forgotten things from her old peaceful life, fantastic images of herself walking down to the Japanese camp, fishing with Allison on the west coast, food—a turmoil of memories and visions. She looked at herself, at her strange clothing, her dirty hands, at the muddy foxhole and the sleeping Marine, and frowned in wonder and perplexity.

She wanted a drink, but there was no water, the foxhole floor having dried. She dabbled with the notion of going to the little river, but she knew she was afraid to leave the foxhole in daylight. She licked her dry lips and prayed and thought and prayed again. She fell into a sort of drowsy hysteria and then into a short sleep, and awoke and went and looked at Allison and resumed her vigil. Later the thought of the uniform came back, and now it was hardly repulsive at all.

She went and examined Allison closely, watching his steady breathing and the flutter of his lips. Then she got the uniform and took it to the light and unrolled it. It was damp and heavy. She put it down and stood away from it, hesitating. With a quick movement she picked

it up, went to the rear of the foxhole, hurriedly got out of Allison's clothing, and as hurriedly pulled on the Japanese pants and jacket, working frantically with her lips tightly shut as one who does a necessary but unpleasant task.

When it was done it ceased to trouble her. She took Allison's shirt and pants and laid them beside him, then went to the entrance to wait. Except for a wriggle or two of her shoulders she gave no more thought to her dress.

At the first touch of coolness from the coming night Allison awoke. He got up from the sticky floor and stretched himself.

He saw the things at his feet and wheeled about, seeking her. He looked at her in silence for a while, then he said, "Well."

It expressed everything. He put on his shirt and tucked it into his pants.

"Anything happen?" he asked.

"No," she replied. "It's all been quiet."

"Huh." He was vastly disappointed and troubled. He peered at her questioningly and she could see the tenderness in him. He was looking at her with the unspoken question and his ears were listening, straining for sounds he wanted to hear. She saw the doubt come to life in his eyes and grow. He hunched his shoulders, stepped to the entrance and peered forth at the dying day. He turned back, not looking at her, looking about him with fugitive glances. Suddenly he fell against the wall. She couldn't understand all this, and she stared as he wiped the back of a hand across face and mouth, as a man does who tries to force himself to be calm in a moment of panic. "I sure saw that plane," he muttered. "It was one of ours—sure. I saw the star on the wing. And the guns—the guns!"

He straightened and stepped to her, putting a hand on her shoulder and shaking her. "It was planes? It was guns?" he insisted fiercely. "I—before I passed out. They was shooting at the planes?"

In a flash she understood his doubt and the terror and disappointment of it.

"Oh yes, yes," she said soothingly, forcing the conviction into him. "Yes. A plane and guns. You saw the plane. You said it was American. I heard it. I couldn't see it. I heard it. And I heard the guns. I heard them shooting, and the plane engines. You came and got the gun and you wanted to go out. I wanted to stop you. I couldn't have. You were wild to go. But you collapsed. Tired and being hungry, and then the excitement of the planes. It was too much for you. You've been asleep ever since."

"All that time." He was looking out at the rapidly falling night. "Wasn't there no more? No more planes?"

"You were worn out. I let you sleep. Nothing more happened after the first shooting—the shooting you heard. There was nothing more."

ALLISON was silent, sunk in thought. His hand still rested on her shoulder, but she felt the grip go out of it and was glad, knowing that his tenderness was easing.

"Some guy on a recon flight," he said gravely. He paused and his hand fell away. Then his face lit up again and in the gloom she saw his eyes gleam.

"A recon flight," he said, his voice lifting. "It proves something, Sister. Look, we never see anything like that in all this time. It's the first time we see anybody save Japs. They can't be far away, our fellows. They must have come nearer. Don't you see? Making recon flights. What it means there's a force somewhere about."

"Yes," she said, stimulating eagerness. She couldn't become as excited as he about it, because her practical mind couldn't see what good it did them. They were without food and they needed water.

Allison had no thought other than

that he couldn't keep still. He picked up the sub-machine gun, examined it in the dimming light, and slung it from a shoulder.

"Only way is to go see what they're doing," he said strongly.

She was alarmed at once. "No," she cried. "Not go down there. You mustn't. They'll be stirred. They'll be watching. You aren't strong—if they saw you—"

"I gotta know."

"You can't leave me. I couldn't stay here. Not alone, knowing you were down there. I'd go crazy."

He was silent. She could no longer see his face, and it troubled her greatly not to be able to read his expression.

WITH obviously restrained impatience he said, "Look, we stop in this hole much longer we stop here and die. You get that? We gotta drink now and we gotta eat mighty soon or be too weak to stand up. After that it wouldn't be so good. You see anybody die of hunger, it ain't pretty. Maybe I can drop a pig or a squirrel or something. Maybe way down there in the valley they wouldn't hear me shoot. Maybe a little fire," he flicked the petrol lighter experimentally and blew out its tiny flame—"wouldn't be seen."

"I can't stay here alone," she said.

"All right. Guess whatever comes it's best not to be apart. Come on."

The night was heavy with heat and a haze dimmed the stars. Underfoot the ground was soft, and in some places oozy from the rains. In the hollows grey mists hovered. They could see tiny phosphorescent gleams on the ground and luminous fungi glowed palely. They went slowly and carefully, Allison leading.

"I feel better with a shirt on," he said once. She didn't reply, but she knew he was thanking her.

When they drew near it they could hear the little river murmuring as it rushed along, heavy with flood, in the darkness. Its sound mounted as they approached it until it became a roar that overcame other sounds of the night. When they reached it they crouched and scooped the water into their mouths with their hands. It tasted of mud and rotting vegetation.

After they had drunk, he moved on uncertainly and then stopped so suddenly that she bumped into him.

"What is it?" she whispered.

"Listen!"

She could hear nothing save the strong chafe of the stream.

"What is it?"

"Nothing. We can't hear nothing except the water. It's early in the night, see? I was trying to hear them"—he looked up the hidden slope that pointed to the Japanese camp—"they'd be noisy at this time of night, a big crowd like that. Well, if we can't hear them, how about them not hearing us?"

She listened to the water and looked about her. The blackness was like a wall, slitted here and there by the sickly gleam of the fungi. The air was lifeless. Sound wouldn't carry far.

"It's possible," she admitted cautiously.

"They won't be listening like us."

She didn't speak. Allison moved forward and she followed, sensing that he was dropping farther into the valley. Presently he halted again.

"We'll watch here," he said. "Look up in the trees against the sky. You see anything like that—a bird or a squirrel?"

She was peering up into the heavy foliage of the trees, seeing only darkness, when she heard the swish of huge wings. Before she could look for the bird the gun crashed beside her head. She choked back a scream and stood, dazed, while Allison went stooping into the brush.

"I got it," he cried, and came back carrying something.

He held it up so that she could make it out against the hazy sky.

"Owl, I reckon," he said briefly.

"Listen!" They stood as though frozen, but only the river made sound.

He took her hand, turned, and led her rapidly by twists and turns, but always close to the river, until she began to stumble with exhaustion. Then he stopped. The sweat poured down her face.

"How are you doing, Sister?"

"I—I can manage."

"We had to beat it outta there. Maybe they heard them shots. Maybe they sent out a patrol."

They stood for long minutes. Presently he said, "No chance for a fire here. Too wet. Think you could make it to the west beach. There's maybe driftwood left high there from a tide. Might be some dry enough to burn."

"I—I think so. If you don't hurry, I must have another drink."

"Me, too."

He moved, and stopped dead as a heavy explosion shook the night. The sound seemed to stop the river's roar for a moment. Allison stood in the eerie darkness, not speaking, his head up. He was waiting for another sound. But there was nothing but the river.

Suddenly he turned away from the river and began to go up the slope.

"It must have been something," he muttered.

She had to make a little run to catch him. He strode on, ignoring her. He turned and twisted through the brush and she panted after him. Occasionally he stopped and both of them plucked leeches from themselves. After the first rush up the hills his pace slowed. He was impatient with his weakness and she heard him muttering to himself. Always scared of him in moments like this she kept silence, grimly struggling on behind him, hearing rather than seeing him ahead of her, not wanting to go on but fearful of being left alone in the night.

She was aware that he had stopped again, and that he was intently peering upward. She lifted her head. Light showed through the trees up there. As they watched it spread until it was lighting the sky over the bay. There was a smell of burning. They were wordless with wonder. Allison moved forward again and presently they reached the top of the hill and crept down to the jungle fringe. They stared for a long time at the scene below, looked at each other, and turned their eyes again to the enemy camp. Automatically they picked at leeches or smacked at insects.

Fires were burning in the clearing and there was great activity in their fitful light. They could see the shadowy outlines of ships in the bay and at the ruined wharf. Blue, hooded lights shone here and there on the land and out on the water. There were shouts, the noise of engines, a creaking as of derricks. Allison and Sister Angela stared silently down, trying to understand what they saw and heard. A ship moved slowly away from the wharf and they could see its vague shape moving through the small fleet in the bay. As they watched flame suddenly outlined the bungalow and began to spout and leap from it, curling into the smoke that hung low over everything.

"They're burning the house. The house is burning," he said stupidly. The meaning dawned on Sister Angela.

"They're going away," she said, quite calmly. Then it struck home and she repeated it, excitedly and wonderingly. "They're going away."

Allison looked swiftly at her and then down to the bay. He didn't say anything for a moment or so, then, "Yeah. But it don't make sense. The first lot went away. Now this lot. It don't make sense."

He crinkled up his face and spat sideways, moving restlessly back and forth.

"It don't make sense," he repeated, and fell into a long silence, his eyes on the Japanese. Behind them the jungle was noisy, its inhabitants disturbed by the fires and the smoke drifting through the



tree. Allison plucked a leech from his hand and looked at it as though wondering what it was before he hurled it aside.

"They're going away," said Sister Angela, and now there was strong relief in her voice.

"Yeah. But why?" He was trying to keep his excitement under control. "What's got into 'em?" He looked up at the stars, dimmed by smoke and tropic haze. "Maybe," he said, reluctantly, as though fearful of hoping, "maybe they're going back. Maybe they're being driven back. God, if only a man could know."

She saw no profanity in the cry. "Yes," she said soberly, "if only we could know."

After a while she said, "Let's go back. We ought to go back."

"No," he said. "I'm staying. I've got to see what goes on."

In the next few hours he saw. Gradually the fires died down and the blue lights disappeared. Gradually the ships moved out of the bay and were lost in the darkness of the sea. Gradually the sounds died out until there was silence down there amid the dying glow of the fires. Allison considered going down there, but was easily persuaded against it. There was no way of being sure that the whole force had departed. With the nun alternately dozing and waking beside him, he waited impatiently for dawn.

There was but the faintest tinge of grey in the east when he suddenly raised his head, listening. From far away in the south-east came a murmur that rapidly increased to a drone.

"Planes," he muttered. He waited a moment, then slung the gun, took the dead owl in one hand and with the other jerked the nun to her feet and dragged her back into the brush on the hill. As the first planes roared in over their heads he flung her violently down and fell beside her, feeling the blast from a stick of bombs as he did so.

**H**E made it twenty planes, in flights of five. They came in low, dropped their bombs, and rose steeply against the paling sky. They were twin-engine aircraft, and though he couldn't see their markings he knew them to be American. Bombs fell among the dying fires, along the wharf and in the water, plumped into the collapsed bungalow and patterned all the target with spouts of flame and quick shuddering explosions. On the hill the fugitives could feel the blasts slapping them like hands, waves of heat swept over them, their heads rang with the rolling detonations, and the air reeked with the smell of explosive. As the planes unloaded and gained height they turned and swept in, machine-gunning the smoke-hidden target.

Allison found his voice. "Too late," he howled. "Too late! Oh hell, boys, why'n't you come yesterday—or last night!"

Long, before sunrise the last of the planes had vanished into the south-east. Allison and the nun, shaken, waited on the hillside for them to come back. When it was apparent that no more were coming, they went down to the desolation. The fires still smouldered. Bombs had smashed the ruined wharf and buildings, the bungalow was ashes and charred iron and timber ends. The soft, sodden ground was pitted with craters; everything was mixed and mashed with mud and upthrown earth. The raiders had not wasted a bomb, from their point of view. But it had all been wasted. The Japanese had fired what they had not removed. All that had remained for the bombs were rubbish and rags and fires.

Smoke drifted about and there was the harsh, hot smell of explosives. Grubs and beetles, thrown out of the earth, wriggled and scurried here and there. Allison and the nun searched hopelessly in the ruins. They found one undamaged can from which the label had been blasted away. Allison smashed it open with a rusty

bolt from the broken wharf. It oozed apricot jam. They scraped the jam from the can with their fingers as they walked about, stuffing it into their mouths and licking like schoolchildren. Presently Allison went down to the sea, tore the feathers from the dead owl and made what he could of it, for the bullets had smashed it fearfully. He spitted it on a stick and toasted it on one of the fires. They shared the scorched flesh and felt better for it.

"It won't be long now," Allison said. Then Japs must have known the boys was coming. That's why they got out. Our fellows will be here soon now." He fished the cigarettes he had taken from the dead Japanese from his shirt pocket, lit one and looked out to sea, absurdly hoping to see the first friendly ship making for the bay.

Sister Angela looked at him. He was like a clothed savage in his long and matted hair and beard, the clothing torn and smeared with mud and mould. Above his sunken cheeks his eyes, large and unnaturally bright, looked out of their sunken sockets. Suddenly she recalled his face as she had seen it at their first meeting and there seemed a lifetime between the two faces.

She knew that she was no elegant night herself, clumsy in the Japanese uniform, her hair wild, her face and hands mud-smeared, her skin red from insect bites and leech sores where there was no mud, her fingernails long and broken, her lips cracked. Her body itched and was clammy and dirty and incredibly weary. It occurred to her that neither of them could survive much longer without succor. Being a woman, she was the more practical of the two, and though she followed his gaze out to sea it was without hope of seeing friendly ships. Meantime, they needed food, cleanliness, and rest.

She turned to speak to him and saw him pull up a trouser leg and examine his right shin. There was an ugly sore just under the knee, another to one side of it and nearer the ankle. She craned to see this lower one, which was a sickly, livid color. She bent closer, seeing pus ooze from it.

Her weariness fell away from her. "That's a tropic ulcer," she said, in a sharp voice of a nurse who discovers a patient, hiding something. "That must be attended to. Why didn't you tell me about them before this?"

"Guess I never noticed them till yesterday," he said. "Thought they was just scratches from the brush that got a little infected."

"A little infected! A little infected! They're bad."

She made him go down to the sea and wash himself. She went off out of his sight and bathed in the sea, and took her linen under-gown and washed it and scoured it with sand and rinsed it, wringing the stiff salt water from it. She carried it back to Allison and tore it into strips, which she hung to dry while she examined his ulcers. He confessed to irritation under his armpits and she found infection there, and scolded him for not having told her of it. She soaked bits of her undergarment in the sea and swabbed out the running ulcers on his leg, believing the brine would disinfect them, making him wince.

"We must have hot water," she said, and searched for the can that had contained the apricot jam. This she scoured out with sand and water, then heated water in it on a fire. Allison sat dumb and wincing as she fomented the ulcers and the places under the arms. She bound linen strips over the sores, then ordered him to heat more water and bathe his more intimate parts, going away while he did it. He got some relief from this treatment, and he saw from her expression that she was worried.

"Guess it ain't so bad," he comforted her. "Only needs a bit of care. After all, we done come through pretty healthy. We been lucky, I guess."

"We are under the eye of God," she said gravely.

"O.K.," he said. "We'll take it that way, if you want." He was too weary for argument.

"How can we take it any other way?" she demanded, passionately, for she was weary to the point of irritation. "Why are you so blind? How could we have come through if left to ourselves? And now, for the second time, they—the Japanese—they've been forced to go away from here. Blessed Mary, intercede for my friend and make open his eyes."

Allison saw her vexation and thought of all she had suffered. He said peaceably, "Sister, you're about all in. You take a rest. I'll watch. Nothing to stop you taking a rest."

"It is you who should rest."

"O.K. But you first. Right now I don't want to sleep. I want to watch the sea. I gotta watch the sea."

They watched the sea—and the sky—for five days. They lived on parrots and squirrels that he brought down with the gun and which they roasted on a fire they had preserved. The bullets always made a mess of the carcasses, but they paid no attention to that. They slept on the beach by night, one or other keeping watch, for leeches would not come across the sand. In spite of constant attention and cleaning, Allison's sores continued to make pus, and more of them appeared on his body.

**S**ISTER ANGELA made him lie in the sea and lave the wounds with salt water, but it did little good. She couldn't understand why the brine didn't heal the sores and stop them spreading, not realising that the infection was inside and the sores were merely its outward manifestation.

She thought he needed greens and they boiled and ate young palm shoots and various cabbage leaves plucked on the jungle fringe. The stuff was astringent or sour. Sometimes it caused them to vomit, and they had periods of intestinal distress. Once they made a journey to the little river in search of yams, but they couldn't find the place or the floods had washed it out or it wasn't the time for yams. Presently Allison realised that he had dysentery, and this, with an awareness of growing weakness, shook his spirit. He brooded on it, sitting apathetically on the beach, and Sister Angela tried to fill him with hopes she didn't feel herself.

The days were dry and clear and hot, the nights cooler. For five days they waited on the bomb-smashed shore for the ships or planes Allison expected. After that he began to lose hope. It was as though all the world was gone and only he and the nun left. The final catastrophe occurred on the seventh day of their waiting. He went shakily up the ridge to shoot something, saw a small drove of pigs, and raised the gun. It jammed. He came back to the beach and fought with the mechanism until night came. He had no way of repairing it. He cursed the gun querulously and threw it aside.

His despair affected his companion. They sat listlessly about or made short journeys for no particular purpose, scarcely speaking to each other. The pain of the sores, the dysentery, and the continual drain on his nervous system reduced Allison rapidly. He was beyond the effort of hunting for food in the jungle.

They tried to stab fish with sharpened sticks in the tides, but were too weak or the fish too alert. Sister Angela found shellfish in the sand and on the wharf piles and baked them, but she could never find enough. The rainwater in the bomb craters began to dry off and life appeared in it. She caught tadpoles and strange beetles and snails in the water and boiled them, but it was poor sustenance. She had sense enough to realise the risks of the water and boiled all they drank. But the can gave out at last, burnt through from the continual use over the fire, and leaked and gradually disintegrated and fell to pieces.

So they tried to go without water as long as they could and made terrible journeys to the little river at night and drank from it. Sister Angela wanted to stay by the little river; he objected at first, as querulous as a sick child, but then he saw reason and agreed. Almost immediately the leeches found them, and though she tried to protect them with mud, the leeches got at them both. The skin of Allison's face and hands had turned leaden and was drawn over the bones so tightly as to seem like thin paper, likely to burst open at a touch. As his strength failed he became light-headed, often going apart, muttering to himself.

Despair came to Sister Angela the day he lay by a tree and refused to get up at her request.

"Leave me be," he muttered. "It's no good. Leave me be."

She looked at his drawn, grey face in its tangle of hair, at the mouth fallen partly open, the dull eyes. For the first time she knew a terrible doubt. Had her spiritual comforters deserted her? Was there nothing to all this but a useless death here in this alien mud? The questions so startled her that she went to her knees, fingered the rosary that still hung about her neck, and prayed.

The very act of praying restored her faith, and from doubting God she changed to doubting herself. Had she erred somewhere? She tried anxiously to discover any error, but could not.

Then she prayed for guidance, asking that her fault be made clear to her so that she might correct it or, failing that, do penance for it. She came to believe that it had to do with Allison; with her failure to convert him to her own belief that they were God's children serving His purpose, with nothing to fear and only the splendid hope of His eternal will before them.

To her there was nothing silly about trying to convince a starving man, rotten with tropic ulcers and dying of dysentery, that God knew about it and had ordained it for His own inscrutable purpose.

Nor to her was there anything absurd in believing that her own frightful state was also part of God's plan for them. No earthly hope remained to her, all her trust was in God, and in that trust there was no longer any doubt.

"Ave Maria," she moaned, on her knees in the dark jungle beside the sweet man. "Help me, for thy sweet Son's sake. I can do nothing without thee."

And it was as though a voice spoke to her, telling her what to do. She knelt a moment or so, transfixed and listening, and then she was on her feet, tugging at Allison.

"Come," she whispered, with awe in her voice. "Come. Let us go away, over to the other side. They are waiting for us there."

"Eh?" Allison croaked. "I don't mean San Diego. I said San Diego, but I don't mean San Diego. It's some place else and—"

"Come," she urged, tugging at him with all her strength. "They are waiting; over there."

"All right," he said, with an acquiescence that startled and then thrilled her, for it confirmed her conviction of help and guidance. He got to his feet and leaned upon her. "All right. But I didn't mean San Diego. I said it but not San—San—say, what was it?"

"Yes," she said soothingly. "Only come. They won't wait if we don't hurry."

"S'all right with me," he said. "Don't you get to thinking it ain't. It's all right with me."

He fell silent then, and she led him slowly through the jungle and up the slope towards the west beach.

His progress was slow and halting. After his first few steps Allison almost fell, but she held him. As they moved forward and his weight came upon her, she stumbled, but managed to keep herself and him upright. They got going again. Allison muttered and mumbled in a

semi-hysteria, but he staggered onward in childlike obedience to her will. This strengthened her enormously. She took it for that help for which she had prayed and at its manifestation she gained more strength. She dragged the falling Marine upward through the darkness, impatiently pushing through the brush, following the direction she knew so well.

She was now driven by an inflexible determination to get him to the west side; to that beach where, on the night when he had raided the enemy stores and she had believed him lost, she had gone to wait for whatever was in store for her, and had felt the presence of angels all about her. There, she was convinced, lay succor. The moment she had recalled that night, while searching for her error back there by the little river, she had known for one beautiful flashing instant the same calm and confidence that had stayed her then. The memory had passed, but it had seemed to her to be a message, a sign that help awaited them on the west beach, and now her heart was charged with the conviction that her duty was to get Allison there.

And supreme above her physical weakness, dissolving all doubt and shining before her like a lodestar, was the further conviction that her penance lay in the agony of this journey through the black jungle with her ailing companion, and that her reward awaited her on the familiar, and now to her holy, beach that had been blessed by the presence of angels.

The air was heavy in this breathless dark and the humidity was like a weight. Vines caught their feet and spiky branches caught at their clothing. Around them the jungle chattered and squealed and grunted, and over all was the mouldy smell of damp and overgrown places. Sister Angela could feel Allison's shirt becoming sodden with sweat, her own body ran with it, and the Japanese uniform clung to her like a wet blanket. She was unaccustomed to the tightness of the pants, and it hampered her legs and exaggerated her weakness.

Doggishly she held on until something tripped her and she went to her knees. Allison swayed above her, then collapsed loosely, falling with his face to the earth and his body across her feet. Terror-stricken for a moment, she felt for him, found his face and turned it upward, crying, "You must get up. Please Mr. Allison, get up."

**A**LLISON lay inert. His babblings had ceased. Sister Angela got her feet from under him and crawled to his face and bent over it. She heard and felt his short, labored breaths. She touched his face and hands, feeling his skin wet and hot. Somewhere a beast cried and there were smaller noises near and far. Terror rushed at her again, but she fought it off, fingering her beads and thinking prayers. Then she got to her feet and put her hands under his shoulders and tried to raise him. It was too much for her. She sank beside him, dazed by the effort, whimpering to herself. She tugged at him futilely and, in the very act of it collapsed into unconsciousness.

She awoke to the touch of Allison's hand, feeling her face uncertainly. Before she could speak his hand found her hair, paused, and was drawn.

"Is that you, Sister?" he asked mildly.

The leap of her heart at the sanity of his voice struck her momentarily dumb.

"It's you, isn't it?" he asked.

"Yes. Oh, thank God. Thank God."

"Eh?"

"You've been feverish. Talking wildly."

He was silent. She heard him struggle and bent towards him, slipping an arm under his shoulders. He rested against her, panting a little.



"Guess I—guess I"—he began, paused, and with his voice suddenly fainter said, "I can't see. Where are we?"

"In the jungle," she answered. "We're on the way to the west beach. They're waiting there for us."

She felt his body leap and tauten against her arm.

"Then they came; they've landed," he said, with a kind of breaking exultation.

She frowned, trying to comprehend him. It hadn't occurred to her that his thoughts were not running in the same channel as her own. Then she knew what he meant.

"I mean the angels," she said carefully, as one explains to a child. "Not soldiers—the angels. They came before. They are waiting now. We must go there."

"Oh, that!" It was spoken in a long-drawn, shuddering sigh of disappointment.

She looked about her at the darkness fearfully, like one who hoped others hadn't heard him. His disbelief and patient scorn frightened her with a dread of failure. A pang of terror struck deep into her—terror because she was unable to convince him.

She wanted to put her absolute certainty into him and his resistance shocked and dismayed her. She had the fear that she was no longer being helped. She sought for words to say to him, but they wouldn't come.

She crouched in the jungle blackness, with the weight of the night upon her, all around her the pitiless wilderness and its wild and unseen life, its mocking and minatory voices, and her heart began to grow cold in her breast.

She was aware of Allison against her, aware of his body on her arm and of his panting breath. But in that moment she was so stricken by fear for her own soul that the man meant nothing. Then her mind stirred and she was suddenly ashamed of her selfishness and the true, selfish heart of the nun beat again and she prayed, "Pity me, Mother, and punish me if you must, but put not my fault on my friend."

Involuntarily she pressed Allison to her, as would a mother a babe, and holding him thus she sank into a waiting calm. There was nothing more she could do, poor thing, than wait.

She felt Allison stir and lift himself, heard him speaking, but did not understand his words until he repeated them.

"Sister, you really believe they—they're waiting."

"Yes." She sighed. Somewhere close by there was a rooting and snuffling in the brush, and the dank, rotted-wood smell of the jungle seemed to stir. Allison shivered. She felt the tremor run all down his length. Then his hand came out of the darkness, seeking her face. It touched her forehead and fell to her cheek, upon which it rested gently for a moment, then patted her gently before it fell away.

"Look," he said, speaking slowly and hesitantly, choosing his words. "Look. Somehow I'm thinking—well, maybe you got it to rights. Maybe you know more than me. If you want we'll go over there."

Ten minutes before, his words would have uplifted her. But she was now on the verge of that sublime acceptance the martyrs knew. Her mind was no longer in the black and stinking jungle; it was with her spirit reaching to the stars.

"Death is nothing," she said, her voice strong with exaltation. "It does not matter where our bodies be. There is nothing can prevent our souls from living."

Allison deliberated slowly over this. His mind picked out and fastened on the word death, and hovered around it, considering it. It was in his thoughts that death did not matter. With an awful clarity he was aware of his weakness and their hopeless situation.

Somewhere, out beyond the jungle and the sea, people lived and soldiers fought and ships went on the ocean, but here in this hot blackness there was nothing save a deeper blackness. What good was there in a man whose legs were as water and whose body was empty of strength?

"Guess I never thought of it like this," he muttered, and through his mind ran recollections of earlier thoughts about death. "Never thought of it this way," he repeated. Suddenly the nearness of death appalled him. He shrank from an awful black cloud that appeared to be closing on him from the blackness of the night.

In that brief moment death ceased to be an abstraction. It became a terrible reality, a thing almost visible in its stark and appalling truth. It could be recognised as a terrifying personal condition far transcending weakness and disease and hunger; it loomed before his stricken eyes as a shape without form and a form without shape, dreadful, enormous, real! In his supreme terror there burst from him the cry of the terrified child within him, "God! God in heaven! Father!"

Instantly it seemed to Allison that the very jungle itself was silent. He knew a swift though timeless period of light, as though his mind had burst through a curtain. Then the night and the jungle, and the smell of the jungle and its noises were with him again. He obeyed an impulse to rise and was astonished to find himself on his feet. He swayed a little, wondering about this accession of strength, felt his feet firm on the ground, bent and reached for the nun.

"Come," he said. "Let's go."

"Go?" she whispered.

"To the beach," he said. "You wanted to go to the beach."

She got to her feet and stood beside him. Neither could see the other's face, yet each knew the one to be looking at the other.

"You," she said, slowly and wonderingly, "You believe."

He took a long time over the answer. He wanted to explain to her that he didn't believe angels would be waiting for them. He had no belief in that. But he knew that it wouldn't do so to say it; saying it would dash her.

He wanted to explain that he believed in God and that God knew about them, but that he didn't believe or expect that God would send angels to meet them at the beach. There was a good deal more he wanted to explain, but he was too weak and sick for one thing, and he didn't believe it could all be explained for another.

He struggled to simplify his thoughts and clarify his speech, and all that came out of his confusion was the one clear thought that he must not say anything that would make her doubt, must rather seek a way to confirm her in her own belief. It seemed that the best way to serve his need, and hers, was to answer, "Yes, I believe," and let her make what she would of it.

"Yes, I believe," he said sincerely.

She fell away from him in the darkness and he realised that she had fallen to her knees. Some impulse sent him down beside her. He had hardly reached the ground when she arose and her voice, thin and piping and tremulous, but triumphant, sent a hymn of gratitude into the jungle night. She stopped as suddenly as she had begun and he began to feel his old awe of her mystery, and was afraid of it. He wanted to keep this friendly communion with her and to hold to the things that had uplifted his spirit.

"Let's go," he said, anxiously.

She moved with him, and walking slowly, sometimes stumbling, frequently pausing for rest, they made their way.

But spiritual fervor cannot for long sustain a body reduced almost to its last strength and Allison's physical weakness quickly reasserted itself. Shortly he was staggering, and only the nun's extraordinary strength kept them going. She supported him, practically dragging him at times, holding him up when they stopped to rest, resolutely tugging him onwards because she feared that if he once got to the ground again he would be done.

**B**EATING back the dizziness from her brain she forced her aching limbs along, and murmured to him encouragingly. Presently he began to fall, and she would have to drag him to his feet and get him moving again. She began to regard the night and the jungle as a manifestation of evil trying to prevent them reaching the beach and she fought them relentlessly. Allison was practically in a stupor, his earlier flash of consciousness gone, and he moved automatically. It was the nun's indomitable will that marched forward, dragging their bodies after it.

Heaven alone knows how she did it, but when the first grey light of dawn lit the sea she had him lying on the sandy beach of the western cove. He lay as one dead—his breathing being nothing more than widely spaced, faint gasps. She crouched on the fringe of the jungle a few feet above him, waiting and praying. Here she had sat on the night of his raid, when she had supposed him killed or captured, and had herself come here and placed herself in the hands of God, and felt angels all about her.

She had brought her companion here, buoyed by a faith that only in this spot would they find the help she had prayed for. Now she was content to wait and pray, secure in the knowledge that she had done her penance and her part. Her spirit was calm with a soft sense of joy and relief. She knew it was the end, one way or another, and she wasn't very much interested in whether help should come from earth or heaven. If earthly death was to be their destiny here it would be in the knowledge, the presence, and the love of the Virgin.

There was a low mist along the sea. It came in over the beach in swatches, turning and twisting slowly, the upper curls of its soft billows silvery in the first pale dawn light. Sister Angela saw that pale light and an anxiety as faint as the light itself disturbed her, for she believed the help must come before the daylight rushed up out of the sea.

She raised her head and was transfixed, one hand raised, with a look of glory spreading over her thin and dirty face, as she saw coming over the sea and walking across the sea in the mist and the waters three ghostly and silent figures. They loomed through the mist as giants, their upper forms outlined and blurred in a strange, silvery radiance.

Sister Angela's heart leapt in her body and a great, bearing emotion the like of which she had never felt before flooded her being. In her Japanese uniform she rose up with a glad, broken cry of awe and reverence and gratitude bursting from her poor, overwrought heart. For an instant she beheld them, saw them pause and turn towards her.

"Mary, Mother of God," she whispered at the glory of their coming, fell to her knees and, as she fell, saw a ripple of light before she lost her senses.

On the sand Allison heard rapid sounds. He turned on his side towards the sea and began to struggle to his feet. He barely had time to discern three figures in the water before the fire rippled again and something sent him spinning into darkness. Almost at once he was conscious again, astonished because he was no longer weak or sick and because he could stand without support. Somebody, a man, was lying beside him on the sand. He didn't know who it was, didn't care, reveling in this strange, aerie sense of liberation, as though he were floating on air.

He turned to look for Sister Angela, to tell her about it, and saw her near the wall of jungle. Yet it wasn't Sister Angela as he had known her. There was nothing of face or figure, only a certainty that it was she. He was aware that she knew about him, about this strange sense of freedom. He called to her voicelessly and there was her smile and welcome. Welcome was all about her. And about the others with her.

He moved towards her, not dismayed by the others or embarrassed by them or even curious about them. For they had welcome for him, too. He moved through an ineffable aura of welcome and peace.

The three ambassadors of heaven stood in the water and watched for perhaps half a minute. Then they turned obliquely and ran through the water on to the sand and ran faster along the sand until they were behind a point of rocks, where they fell on their stomachs and panted.

The smallest of them, who wore a Chinese sunhat and faded khaki shorts and nothing else, pushed his

tommy-gun forward and peered above the rocks at the sand and jungle, and spoke thus: "Let's get outta here. Let's get to the prau on a boat it somewhere else."

The tallest one wore no more than black whiskers and a sarong and he said, "I'm with you, Russ. When that Jap stood up and yelled I thought we were done for. See anything?"

"Not a thing. But that don't mean nothin'. Place in back there could be lousy with 'em. Let's get outta here before the sun comes."

The third man was lean and brown, wore shorts and jacket and a turban and said, "Those two, Sahib, were likely alone, perhaps guarding this beach. More are camped back there. I bet you a lot."

Russ was between fear and rage: "Let's go, let's go. What we want here? Man gets outta Singapore—all them months dodgin' round in that Sumatra back country—we got clear up to now. They hadda be here, too. Let's go."

The turbaned one answered by leaping to his feet and setting off at a run, followed by the others. They raced along the dawnlit shore to a further point, where a prau was drawn up on the sand.

They fell into the light vessel, pushed it to sea, ran up the lateen sail, and with a light wind and their sweeps, made their best speed for the southward turn of the island and the hiding places in the mangroves there, hurrying to get among them and under cover before daylight brought the searching enemy they feared.

As they rounded the point, Russ looked back at the beach.

"I bet," he said with malicious humor, "them two back there never expected to run up against nobody like us."

#### EPILOGUE

Extract from a newspaper of 1946:

One Japanese atrocity that may never be sheeted home was discovered this week when members of the Allied Search Commission now combing the Pacific war areas for the bodies or other evidence of missing allied Servicemen visited a small and uninhabited island north-east of Borneo.

On the beach two skeletons were found. There was not a vestige of clothing on one, but the other, a much smaller skeleton, still retained the remnants of a uniform. The men of the searching unit believed them to be Japanese and were about to inter them when it was noticed that a string of rosary beads lay almost covered in the sand beside the smaller skeleton.

Further investigation revealed that the skeleton was that of a woman. The shattered breast bones clearly indicated that she had been riddled by machine-gun bullets. A closer investigation of the larger skeleton revealed an identity disc still attached by its cord to the neck.

It gave the number and name of Private Henry Allison, of the U.S. Marines, reported missing in the Philippines in 1942.

Later inquiries showed that a Sister of the Ursuline Order, reported missing after being evacuated from Singapore in 1942, had landed on the island with several refugees from a bombed and sunk merchant vessel, and has not since been seen. It seems clear that hers were the rosary beads and hers the bones, and that both she and the Marine were murdered by Japanese while prisoners.

Not more than two miles away on the same island were the remains of a Japanese camp that had, probably before the murders, been heavily bombed. The Japanese indulged in the killing of prisoners as a reprisal for air raids on their military establishments. Every effort will be made to discover the commander of this encampment, and to make him answerable for the killing of the nun and the Marine.

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ALL characters in the serials and short stories which appear in The Australian Women's Weekly are fictitious, and have no reference to any living person.

### Next Week's Complete Novel

## A MOUSE IS BORN

By ANITA LOOS

Anita Loos jumped to fame when her first novel, "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes," was published twenty-seven years ago. In style and content it was something new and refreshing.

Her second book, "But Gentlemen Marry Brunettes," wasn't quite so popular, but it, too, won instant recognition and established its author as a stylist and a master of social satire.

Now, after twenty-four years, she has published another book, "A Mouse is Born," which will be presented in next week's issue.

It is a sophisticated, humorous story, written in the same style as her former novels, with phonetic spelling and quaint forms of expression.

Effie Huntress, a film star familiarly known as

"The Bust," writes to her unborn child, whom she refers to as "Little Mouse" because, she explains, "the word mouse is by-sexual and will fit in no matter what it turns out to be."

Effie writes to "Little Mouse," explaining the life of Hollywood and of her own participation in it; past, present, and imperfect.

Having made her decision on a Career-versus-Motherhood, Effie gives herself up to the job, and during the period of waiting for "Little Mouse" she has lots of time for conjuring up the past and the various times she "underwent a romance."

Our readers will enjoy her memories of them and the intriguing manner in which they are recounted.

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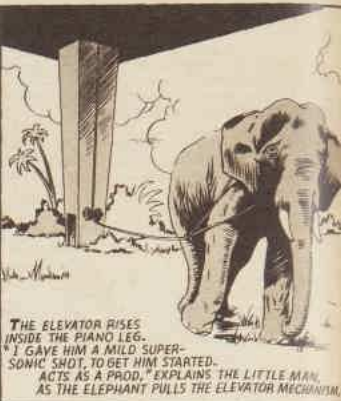
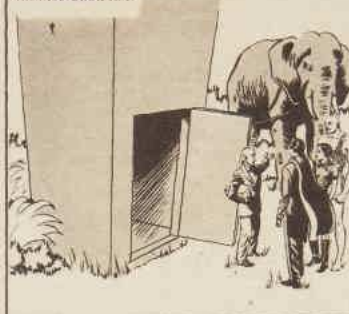


## Mandrake the Magician

MANDRAKE: Master magician, LOTHAR: His giant Nubian servant, and PRINCESS NARDA: Have come to a strange kingdom ruled by a little old man with a mysterious box which he points at them, throwing them into unbearable pain.

Mandrake is furious, and with his magic powers throws the little man into the air. The man says he wants to be friends, and kills a leopard with the supersonic powers of the box. He points to his immense piano, 50 feet high. NOW READ ON:

"COME, THERE'S MUCH TO SEE. WE'LL GO UPSTAIRS. PLEASE USE THE ELEVATOR," THE LITTLE OLD MAN ADDS AS THEY APPROACH A PIANO LEG. "ELEVATOR?" ASKS MANDRAKE. "MY ELEPHANT ELEVATOR," REPLIES THE MUSIC MASTER.



THE ELEVATOR RISES INSIDE THE PIANO LEG. I GAVE HIM A MILD SUPER-SONIC SHOT, TO GET HIM STARTED. ACTS AS A PROD, EXPLAINS THE LITTLE MAN, AS THE ELEPHANT PULLS THE ELEVATOR MECHANISM.



AT THE TOP, THEY LEAVE THE ELEVATOR. "THIS IS MY BALCONY," BEGINS THE OLD MAN. "HAY, IT'S A PIANO KEYBOARD!" EXCLAIMS NARDA. "YES, YOU'LL HEAR IT PLAYED LATER," HE ADDS.



"AND THIS IS WHERE I LIVE," HE SAYS, AS THEY STEP INTO A VAST HALL THAT HAS A VAST NETWORK OF HEAVY METAL CABLES OVERHEAD. "WHY—WE'RE INSIDE THE PIANO!" EXCLAIMS NARDA.



IT LOOKS LIKE—AND IS—AN ENORMOUS PIANO. "HOW DID THIS ALL GET HERE, IN THE CENTRE OF THE JUNGLE?" ASKS MANDRAKE, AMAZED.



THEY WALK ONTO THE HUGE BALCONY, ACTUALLY THE PIANO KEYBOARD. "IT'S A LONG STORY," SAYS PROF. METRO, IN ANSWER TO MANDRAKE'S QUESTION. "I WAS A MUSIC TEACHER—"



"ALL MY LIFE, I WANTED TO OWN A PIANO, BUT I COULD NEVER AFFORD ONE. I ALSO WANTED OTHER THINGS—"



"I LOVED ANIMALS, AND HATED THE CROWDED CITY. I YEARNED FOR THE OPEN SPACES—BUT IT SEEMED I WOULD NEVER REALIZE MY DREAMS—INCLUDING A PIANO—"

TO BE CONTINUED



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THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY — JUNE 25, 1952

by ERLE STANLEY GARDNER

## PERRY MASON

• Famous lawyer Perry Mason, his secretary, Della, and private detective Paul Drake have taken the case of Tommy Hadley, who police think murdered his foster-father, Pops O'Lean. They suspect Chappie Colefax, who is engaged to Tommy's sister, Cricket. Lacking sufficient evidence to convict Chappie, they pin a car theft on him when he and Cricket elope to another State.



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